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FOUR WELSH COUNTIES

BRECKNOCK, CAERNARVON, MERIONETH, AND PEMBROKE.

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Author of "A Reminiscence of Ireland."

"IF ALL THE YEAR WERE PLAYING HOLIDAYS,
TO SPORT WOULD BE AS TEDIOUS AS TO WORK;
BUT, WHEN THEY SELDOM COME, THEY WISH'D-FOR COME.

Henry IV., Act I., Sc. 2.

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PARISH OF STOKE NEWINGTON

THIS STORY OF FOUR WELSH COUNTIES

IS

Dedicated

TO THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS AT GLANUSK, IN REMEMBRANCE OF SEVENTEEN HAPPY YEARS.

FOUR WELSH COUNTIES.

BRECKNOCKSHIRE.

CHAPTER I.

"A blending of all beauties—streams and dells,
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, mountain, vine,
And chiefless castles, breathing stern farewells
From grey but leafy walls where ruin grimly dwells."

The district of which this inland county is a part, was peopled in pre-historic times by the warlike Silures, and called by them Garthmadrin (the fox-hold). The Romans, who first penetrated into South Wales in A.D. 51, speak of the Silures as "wild men of the woods," and they found great difficulty in subduing them; but eventually their leader, the celebrated Caradog, or Caractacus, the hero of the story of "The Little Cottage in Britain," was taken prisoner, and gradually these insatiable conquerors

established themselves not only in Garthmadrin, but throughout the Isle of Britain.

Their power lasted upwards of 300 years, and they have left abundant proofs of it in the ruins of camps, villas, and roads.

> "But when the Romans left us, and their law
> Released its hold upon us,
> The ways were filled with rapine."

In these words the history of the land for hundreds of years is written, with occasional gleams of Christian faith and practice to shed softening rays on the lurid light of blood and revengeful war, until we come to about the year A.D. 400, when Brychan Brycheiniog was prince of Garthmadrin. From him the county derives its present name, and he is chiefly famous for that, and for his large family of fifty children: twenty-five sons and twenty-five daughters, all of whom he brought up in "the fear of God, so as to be able to show the faith in Christ to the Cymry, when they were without faith."

In that ancient book, the Bonedd y Saint (pedigree of the saints), we read of their piety, and of their labours amongst the heathen. All were saints, some were martyrs. Modern research, however, goes to prove that of the fifty, some were grandchildren, or near descendants of Brychan.

Reguli, or chiefs, succeeded each other—some worse, some better than the one that had gone before; the land being continually divided according to the custom of gavelkind, which prevailed throughout Wales, and which gave an equal share to each son.

About the middle of the tenth century Howel Dda —Howel the Good—was king of all Wales, and among many acts for the better government of the country, divided it into cantrefs, or hundreds—literally, a hundred homesteads. To Brecknockshire four were allotted, a number at the present time increased to six.

The isolation and poverty of a country was never a protection against the ruthless Danes and Saxons, and they carried fire and sword into the very heart of the Welsh hills; and so the story goes on, with little of real interest to us, until we come to the time of Bleddyn ap Maenach, the last native prince of this district.

It was now A.D. 1090; the Normans were established in England, and, thirsting for new conquests, turned their greedy eyes on Wales. Already, indeed, FitzHamon held possessions in Morganwg (Glamorgan), and Bernard de Newmarch, half-brother of William the Conqueror, having received from his nephew Rufus a royal grant "of as much land as he could conquer from the Welsh,"

entered this part of the country at the head of a Norman host, and in a decisive battle near the old Roman camp of Caerbannau, totally put to rout the natives under Bleddyn, who was there slain, A.D. 1092.

With this prince, praised by the bards for his virtues and his valour, ended the rule of the native princes in Brycheiniog, and the Norman trod with iron heel on the necks of his people.

But Bernard had some generosity, and, as we shall see, a conscience, and we cannot withhold admiration of a conqueror of those rude days who caused his rival to be buried with honour, and the most solemn rites of the church, in the Abbey of Strata Florida—the Westminster of Wales.

To the eldest son of the unfortunate prince he gave certain productive lands, though he never permitted him complete personal liberty, and to the younger sons also settlements of land. They might justly have considered that they were theirs before, but, all the world over, "Possession is nine points of the law."

And further to ingratiate himself with the Welsh he married Nest (Agnes), grand-daughter of the mighty prince Gruffydd ap Llewelyn. It was however an unfortunate step for the Norman knight, for she was an unfaithful wife and a wicked mother. He also set about the building of a strong castle on

the Honddu, near its confluence with the Usk, removing from the ruined tower of Bleddyn the materials for its erection. The site of this tower was even then historic, for it had been the rallying ground of the earliest inhabitants of the country.

In his old age Bernard, having nothing left to fight for, and doubtless troubled in his mind by his sins, founded the Benedictine Priory of St. John the Evangelist at Brecknock, endowing it liberally; and full of years, in the reign of Henry I., he died, and was buried in the cloister of Gloucester Cathedral, to which house of God he had been a munificent patron.

In the long roll of Lords-Marchers who succeeded him in Brecknock, we read of some renowned in history. The noble knight, Milo FitzWalter, earl of Gloucester, the chivalrous champion of Queen Matilda, was one. From his family it went by marriage to that of De Breos, lords of Builth. William de Breos stands out as one of the greatest villains of monkish chronicle. In the true spirit of his race, he cast longing eyes on the fair land of Gwent, an adjoining district; but his schemes had been frustrated by Sitsyllt, the native prince, a valorous Welshman, and an open foe of the Normans; and he resolved by diabolical treachery to accomplish his purpose. Taking the opportunity of a truce between Sitsyllt and himself, he invited that chief-

tain and his son, and the nobles of Gwentland, to a feast in Brecknock Castle. In the midst of the festivities, he demanded of his guests that they should bind themselves by oath never more to carry about their person either bow, sword, or any other weapon. In indignant tones they scornfully refused. This was enough; De Breos gave a signal, and the great hall was instantly filled with his Norman followers, who fell on the unarmed Welshmen and slaughtered them all. Their swords still reeking with the blood of their victims, they sallied forth, headed by their master, to Sitsyllt's Castle, which lay at no great distance. This they assaulted, and making good their entrance, seized on Gwladys, Sitsyllt's wife, and slaying her son Cadwaladr before her eyes, carried her off a prisoner to Brecknock; first setting fire to, and utterly destroying, her house.

Another story is told of this monster. In A.D. 1196, Trehearn Vychan, a powerful native chief, having received an assurance of safety, came to Brecknock to hold a friendly conference with him, but was seized by bloodhounds, fastened to a horse's tail, and then dragged through the streets to a gallows, where he was beheaded, and afterwards suspended by his feet.

These enormities roused the spirit of the Welsh, and they rose in revolt, only to be crushed and more cruelly treated.

The wife of this De Breos was Maud de Valery, better known as Moll Walbec, a corruption of Malaen-y-Walfa (the fury of the enclosure), for the natives hated and feared her. She is celebrated in the folk-lore of the district for wondrous feats; and legends of her prowess still linger. Hay Castle is said to owe its erection to her. Carrying the stones in her apron, she built it to the topmost tower between sunset and cockcrow. While thus engaged, a small pebble about nine feet long and a couple of feet thick, dropped into her shoe; this at first she did not regard, but presently finding it rather troublesome, she picked it out and threw it over the river into Llowes churchyard, where it can now be seen, grown considerably in size!

Maud turned men's heads by looking at them, a proceeding then considered a proof of witchcraft, and she had such a command of language that the most subtle arguments of those who dared to differ from her melted into thin air. In fact, she bewitched everyone, and to fly through the air on a broomstick was one of the least of her accomplishments.

But as we shall see, Maud was too bold when she left the region of magic. To her persuasion may be ascribed the redeeming feature of her husband's character—the espousal of the cause of Prince Arthur, rightful heir to the crown of England,

against his unprincipled uncle John. The latter becoming suspicious, sent commissioners to demand the custody of the De Breos children as hostages of their father's fidelity, but Maud indignantly replied, that "the king should have none of her sons to keep, who had kept Arthur, his own brother's son, so ill." Her husband tried to soften matters, but the king was enraged at the just sarcasm, and ordered the arrest of the whole family. William de Breos escaped to Normandy, but Maud, less fortunate, was taken, together with her son William and his wife. In vain she paid large sums of money to John, and to his Queen she sent a present of four hundred kine and one bull, all milk-white except their ears, which were tipped with red. But the vindictive monarch was not to be appeased, and the outspoken dame with her son and daughter were carried to Windsor Castle, where, in a loathsome dungeon, denied light, air, and food, they perished miserably.

Their estates were attaindered, and the once proud Lord-Marcher lived for years an exiled mendicant, dependent on convent doles for his bread and clothing. He died in 1212, and with a curious perversity was honoured with a funeral befitting his rank.

Another William de Breos was taken prisoner by Llewelyn ap Iorwerth in an unsuccessful foray, and being discovered in an intrigue with the Princess

Joan, his wife, was hanged by her irate husband. Tradition alone supports this story, and much doubt is thrown on it by the known fact of Joan's piety and virtues, and the devotion paid to her memory by Llewelyn in the beautiful altar tomb he raised over her remains. Jealousy, which has so much to answer for, may have prompted the hasty deed.

The next Lords-Marchers of Brecknock were the De Bohuns, earls of Hereford. Of this illustrious family we have very different tales to tell. High and independent of spirit, several of them were also enlightened friends of the Welsh people.

During the Barons' War in the reign of the feeble Edward II., Humphrey, the eighth lord of this line, was killed at the battle of Boroughbridge; his estates were escheated, and Hugh Despencer, the king's favourite, obtained a grant of the Lordship of Brecknock; but on the death of Edward, and the overthrow of the faction that had ruled him, they reverted to the rightful owners.

The last of this family—the grandfather of the gallant and pious conqueror of France, Henry V.—William de Bohun, lived in great splendour in Brecknock Castle, which he greatly enlarged and improved. He is described as wise and beneficent, living at peace with his neighbours, granting charters to the town, and bestowing alms and oblations on the church. He was also a warrior,

for with three hundred of the men of Brecknock, he accompanied King Edward III. to the French Wars.

Profuse hospitality was then common in the castles of the great, and it was generally exercised at the expense of the tenants; but this good Lord-Marcher was just as well as liberal in his expenditure, thereby encouraging the industries of the town he ruled. "For eleven years he lived a blessing to all around, and when he died, in 1377, the people lost a father, a good and worthy lord."

By the marriage of Mary de Bohun, his second daughter, to Henry Bolingbroke, afterwards Henry IV., the Lordship of Brecknock lapsed to the crown. It was from this king that the town received its first royal charter, and during the rebellion of Owain Glyndwr, which broke out in this reign, he passed through the district in pursuit of that firebrand, issuing a proclamation, dated from Defynnock, Sept. 15th, 1403, promising pardon to the rebels if they would return to their allegiance.

By grant of Henry IV., the Lordship of Brecknock was given to the Dukes of Buckingham, and strange and tragic is the history of Duke Henry of that line. He was uncle to the boy-king Edward V., and nearly related to the queen, his mother, and held the important post of governor of Harlech Castle; yet his turbulent spirit threw off these ties,

and he became the chief instrument in raising Richard of Gloucester to the throne. Scarcely had the little princes lost their lives in the Tower, and Richard was secure, than he turned round in open rebellion. He had been well rewarded with money and lands, had been made governor of all the king's castles in Wales, and Lord Chief Justice of South Wales, and his conduct must ever remain a mystery.

Indignant at his defection, Richard endeavoured to checkmate his schemes by dissimulation, and Duke Henry retired sulkily to Brecknock Castle to plot anew. Unfortunately for both parties Morton, bishop of Ely, an audacious and ambitious prelate, had been committed a prisoner to his care in the days of their friendship, and now these kindred spirits fired each other in their plans to overthrow the blood-stained king. In one of the castle towers, ever since called the Ely Tower, they met and plotted.

Although an actual day was fixed, and everything in train for a rising, Richard's vigilance "nipp'd it in th' bud."

The clever bishop escaped to Flanders, and Buckingham, finding himself deserted, remained at Brecknock, disregarding alike the polite invitation, and the peremptory order, to repair to Court. Spies were sent to watch his movements, and Sir Thomas Vaughan of Tretower was ordered to raise

troops, and attack him if he attempted to leave his stronghold. With the boldest temerity he did so; and at the head of a large but undisciplined force, succeeded in reaching Gloucester, where the Severn being in flood, he could not cross and proceed to Salisbury as he had intended.

His followers dispersed, and he became a fugitive, taking refuge in the house of a retainer named Bannister. This man's fidelity was not proof against the reward of £1000 set on his master's head, and he betrayed him. Without trial, and with most unseemly haste, the Duke was hurried off to Shrewsbury, and there executed.

It is satisfactory to know that the faithless Bannister never got the reward.

When Henry VII. was safely seated on the throne, he restored the confiscated estates of the late duke to his eldest son; but misfortune dogged his steps also. "He was the last, and most unfortunate, yet greatest prince of his race." Inheriting his father's ambition, as well as his features, this "Prince of Brecknock" fell before the jealousy of his plebeian rival Cardinal Wolsey. The story is, that on one occasion when the Cardinal was holding the ewer for Henry VIII. to wash his hands, the king having turned away, the duke ostentatiously dipped his fingers therein. The favourite, furious at what he deemed an insult to himself, raised Henry's

suspicions, which brought Buckingham on a seemingly groundless charge of high treason to the block. When Charles V. of Germany heard of his death, he remarked, that "a butcher's dog had run down the finest buck in England."

With the Duke's death, his family and estates fell away, and after an eventful history of five hundred years—as eventful as any in Wales—the Lordship of Brecknock was merged altogether in the Crown, with the borough and its numerous castles, manors, and dependencies. The burgesses of the town were allowed to retain their ancient franchises on condition of continuing to pay the tribute rent of £120 per annum, "which they had paid with great exaction to their former lords."

In the reign of Henry VIII. the union of England and Wales was consummated, and gradually peace, prosperity, and security to property, ensued; oblivion fell on the hatred and distrust of the past, and life moved on smoother wheels.

The county of Brecknock is very irregular in shape. It is surrounded by parts of four other counties of Wales, and two English ones. North, by Cardiganshire and Radnorshire—from the latter, in most part separated by the rivers Wye, Claerwen, and Elan. West, by Cardiganshire and Caermarthenshire. South, by Glamorganshire and Monmouthshire, and east, by Monmouthshire and Hereford-

shire. It measures about 35 miles from north to south, 30 from east to west, and comprises an area of nearly 754 square miles. It is third in size of the counties of Wales, and the population at the last census was 59,900. It is in the diocese of St. David, and in the province of Canterbury, and it returns one member to Parliament. The county town has recently been disfranchised. There are several railways, and the principal roads are good, and have been skilfully engineered, for although the country is very mountainous, it is seldom the traveller encounters a steep pass. A canal, completed in 1811, from Brecon to Newport, not much used at the present day, is remarkable for its various levels. For 14 miles there is not a lock, for the next 8½ miles there are 34.

Agriculture is the chief industry of the inhabitants, though iron and coal form a very considerable item, the chief seats of which are on the southern border. Small factories where flannel and coarse woollen cloth are manufactured, are to be seen on many a stream-side. The leather of Brecknockshire is of excellent quality.

The fertile soil of the valleys repays the farmer for his toil, and the hillsides shelter and feed his flocks and herds, and what that observant Archdeacon of Brecknock, Giraldus Cambrensis, said five hundred years ago, is even truer now with the improved

farming of our time. "It is a land abounding in corn, pastures, woods, wild deer, and fish of a superior sort, particularly trout, in the Usk, called Umbræ." There is but one exception to note—the wild deer are now represented by their tame descendants in the parks of the country squires.

Mountains.

"Dame Nature drew these mountaynes in such sort,
As though the one should yield the other grace."

Brecknockshire is cradled in mountains, and none of them are more beautiful in outline, or so truly Alpine, than the lordly Beacons, a short distance south-west of the county town. The two most usual ascents are by the Story Arms, or from Cantriff. The latter, shorter and more picturesquely wild, is rough and trying to any but experienced pedestrians, and can only be undertaken by those who know the country. The former, if proper directions are obtained, is easy enough to the stranger.

The three peaks are: Pen-y-Van, or Arthur's Chair, 2862 ft. high, the highest point in South Wales, and only 52 ft. lower than Cader Idris; the second, Van Vee, the pointed Beacon; and the third, Van Vawr, the lesser Beacon. They are always beautiful, whether when, like castled steeps, they soar into the summer air, or hide their majestic

heads in circling mists; and the view from their summits is a vast rolling sea of varying colour. Westward lie the Caermarthenshire Vans, and the long and lofty chain of Fforest Fawr. Southward, the fertile sloping hills that merge into Glamorganshire. Eastward, the lovely vale of Crickhowell, and the glassy expanse of Langorse, ending in the lofty ramparts of the Black Mountains. North-east, the lonely Trecastle Beacon. Almost due north, the picturesque town of Brecknock, set in the meads of the silvery Usk, now swelled to an important river by the numerous confluent streams from the distant blue Epynt Hills.

The old bards say that the renowned Arthur assembled his knights on Pen-y-Van, and there unfolded his plan for the establishment of the order of the Knights of the Round Table. Huge stones and fragments of rock strew the summit, and a precipice of 500 ft. adds a terrific grandeur to the scene, over which a strange silence reigns. Masses of *Saxifraga oppositifolia*, and many other scarce mountain plants, hang their crimson and blue and white blossoms from these steep cliffs, softening the ruggedness of the surrounding scene.

The mountains of which the Beacons form the eastern extremity, incline south-west to the edge of the county, and on into Caermarthenshire, and have three magnificent peaks on the border line:

Capellante, 2382 ft. high; Talsarn, 2596 ft.; and Fan Vawr, 2631 ft. The whole chain is called Fforest Vawr, or Black Mountains, though the latter appellation is more generally applied to the mountains on the eastern border.

The north-west part of the county consists of a strip of mountain land, thinly peopled, and watered by pretty streams fertilizing narrow valleys, which redeem the bleak round hills, covered with peat and moss resting upon clay, from utter depression. But even they have attractions, for grouse are plentiful.

Separating the valleys of the Wye and the Usk are the Epynt (sloping) Hills; appropriately named, for they slope in a long trend south-west towards the source of the Usk, and through Caermarthenshire to Plynlimon. The highest point is Dwggan, 2070 ft., near Builth. The loveliest scenery lies amongst these hills, which until quite recently was almost unknown to the tourist.

Springing up on the north-eastern edge of the corn-producing vale of Talgarth, is the chain of the Black Mountains, or Hatteral Hills, as they are called on the Herefordshire side, which ranges in a convex line with ever-varying beauty to the well-known Sugar-Loaf mountain near Abergavenny. The highest point in Brecknockshire is Pen Cader (the head of the chair), 2630 ft. high.

In all Wales there are no hills wilder or more

picturesque than those of this range, and nothing in Nature is more charming than the pretty dingles, and narrowing valleys, and dashing streams, with their rippling cascades, that make verdant their journeying towards the lordly Usk. Winding sheep-tracks lure the traveller to climb the rocky spurs, where rare mountain flowers shed their sweetness on the air, and where, on almost every "coigne of vantage," he will find the camps of an ancient and extinct race. For geologists there are the bold, solemn-looking Pen-carreg-calch (head of limestone crag) and the conical Pen-allt-mawr (head of great hill). Under their shadows lie the tract of the Via Julia, and the site of a Roman camp. What can the lover of Nature—the geologist, the antiquarian—desire more?

A few words on the geology of Brecknockshire may be interesting. The Lower Silurian rocks are found in the north-west of the county, in the district extending from the Wye to Llanwrtyd. These are succeeded by the Upper Silurian, on the northern and western flanks of the Epynt Hills, in the neighbourhood of Builth. These pass through the Tilestones into the Old Red Sandstone, which occupies the central portion of the county, and it is of this rock that the higher mountains, such as the Beacons, the Vans, and the Black Mountains,

are composed. Pen-carreg-calch, an insulated outlier of limestone capped with millstone grit, to which we have already referred, shows the immense amount of denudation that the land has experienced. Indeed the valley of the Usk is throughout an example of the way in which the softer marls have been worn away, leaving the upper and harder beds of conglomerate comparatively untouched. In the south of the county, the Old Red Sandstone passes successively through narrow bands of carboniferous limestone and millstone grit, into the coal measures, which are perhaps the most perfect and regular in the whole world, extending in an undulating and massive group from the eastern verge of the valley of the Usk to the river Towy on the west. At the point where the coal merges into the millstone grit, there is generally found a species of limestone which the colliers call "Farewell rock," because it is considered an indication of the end of the seam.

CHAPTER II.

THE USK—TOWNS ON ITS BANKS, AND SURROUNDING DISTRICTS.

"Yet still thy turrets drink the light
Of summer evenings' softest ray,
And ivy garlands green and bright
Still mantle thy decay;
And calm and beauteous as of old
Thy wandering river glides in gold."

Brecknockshire is a land of many rivers, though none of them are navigable. They abound in fish, especially salmon and trout, and are well known to anglers.

The Usk (powerful water) is, *par excellence*, the county river, passing across it from east to west, and having the county town on its banks, though it rises beyond its borders in a spur of the Caermarthenshire Vans. The principal tributaries on the left bank are:—the Cilieni (angular torrent); the Nantbran (crow's brook); the Yscir (rushing

water); the Honddu (old black water); the Llyfni (smooth stream); the Rhiangoll (sheltered stream); the Grwynes, fawr and fechan (greater and lesser murmuring streams).

The Grwyne-fawr separates to a considerable extent the counties of Brecknock and Monmouth.

On the right bank are:—the Cray (sunny stream); the Senni, named after the Seine in France by the Norman family of Havard, who were settled in the neighbourhood for many generations; the Camlais (blue crooked stream); the Tarrel (spouting water); the Ogwm (lively water); the Collwyn (hazelwood water); the Crawnon (rounding river). This stream traverses the parish of Llangynidr (the church of St. Cynidr—a fifth-century saint), and some leasehold property is still held on the flow of its waters. The term is, "As long as the river Crawnon continues to run downwards."

Brecon, or Aberhonddu (mouth of the Honddu), is situated almost in the centre of the county, at the confluence of the Honddu and the Tarrel with the Usk: the former on the left bank, the latter on the right. Set in the midst of broken ground, dismantled towers, gleaming waters, and stately churches, and "cradled in a circle of mountains and grassy hills, the outlines broken by the convergence of numberless valleys through which rivers wind their sinuous way," Brecon is beautiful from

every point. From the ancient bridge the ruins of the castle are best seen. There,

> "Buckingham with standards floating high,
> Through yon dismantled arch pass'd forth to die;"

but its fame and glory have long since departed. In imagination we can people it with gay knights and squires, and richly-attired ladies, and hosts of armed retainers—Welsh vassals from neighbouring border towers and men-at-arms. The siege, the flight of arrows from loop-holed walls, the huge stones thrown from the battlements on the swaying crowd of wild natives, who threw their lives away in vain against the stout portcullis, or into the swelling waters of the Honddu, which moat-like encircled its walls. And we can picture, too, the Norman dames and their children, in the topmost landing of the great keep, listening with terror to the groans that came up to them from below, and ready with their rude surgery and simples to heal, we will hope, alike friend and foe.

Some scanty ruins—and they are not older than the time of Edward III.—are alone left of this once formidable fortress. In a MS. in the British Museum we find that the inhabitants of Brecon destroyed the castle and the walls of the town during the Civil Wars to avoid the miseries of a siege. These remains are in the garden of the Castle Hotel; and on a mound in the garden of a private

house, separated from the foregoing by the public road, is the Ely Tower, in which were concocted the unhappy schemes we have already narrated, and which gives it so much historical interest.

On still higher ground, a little to the north of the castle, and on the right bank of the Honddu, is the beautiful Church of St. John the Evangelist, part of the Priory already alluded to as founded by Bernard de Newmarch for monks of the Benedictine order, and which was made subordinate to Battle Abbey—the thankoffering raised by William the Conqueror on the field of Senlac—at the suggestion of his confessor, who was a monk of that abbey.

This church, restored within recent years under the management of the late Sir G. Scott, is surrounded by numberless graves overshadowed by ancient yew trees. The exterior is very striking from the graceful simplicity of its massive outlines and its battlemented walls; as much the stronghold of the church militant in those wild days in which they rose, as of the church spiritual. Unlike so many Norman churches it was not sheltered by the castle, but stood away on the upland, barring the road to sudden surprise or raid, with defiant grace.

It is cruciform in design, with a broad nave and side aisles, and deep transepts. At the intersection, rises a square and massive embattled tower, containing a peal of eight bells. The tower, chancel,

and transepts, are fine examples of thirteenth century work. Many votive chapels clustered round. The most noticeable now remaining are, in the north transept, that of the Men of Battle; in the south, that called Capel Cochiaid, or chapel of the red-haired men (the Normans), and in the chancel on the north side the Vicar's chapel.

There are several monumental effigies of great interest, and one within the altar rails is very ancient. It is a representation of the Crucifixion, the cross being omitted. Two angels are censing the Saviour from above. On either side are the Virgin Mary and St. John. Beneath are four kneeling figures, supposed to be the persons to whose memory the stone was inscribed. The floor of the nave and aisles is entirely covered with the graves of the ancient and renowned families of the county —the Gams, the Walbeoffs, the Vaughans, the Llewelyns, and many others, and of numerous burghers, their wives and children; and the beautiful floreated crosses carved on their memorial stones are a marked feature here, and also in the chapel of Christ College in the lower town.

The font is Norman, and very curiously decorated with monstrous heads. The remains of a beautiful triple piscina, and a sedilia were found at the restoration. The fine east windows are of great depth; the centre one is now filled with stained

glass, representing St. Michael, trampling down the dragon, triumphant over death, typifying the church militant, and is a memorial to the officers and men of the 24th Regiment who fell at Isandula. Many of them were Welshmen, and Brecon being the depôt, came from the neighbourhood, and none returned from that fatal field.

Sir G. Scott says of this stately Priory Church, "The *quality* of the architecture is as good, as well studied, and as refined as could be found in any building of the period, in this, or perhaps in any other country; and it is fully worthy of taking rank as a cathedral."

What an opportunity for the sons of modern chivalry in this county! They have an example in their ancestor, the fierce Norman freebooter, who spared neither money nor lands. Perhaps they may decline to acknowledge any connection except that of descent with old Bernard, for time changes manners. Does it not also increase the obligations of their inheritance?

Portions of the old Priory walls remain, and also an embattled gateway. A paved cloister connects the church with the adjoining Priory house. The Priory groves—the ambulatory of the monks—is a charming walk under lofty trees which clothe a steep bank, at the base of which the restless Honddu frets its way.

St. Mary's Church, in the centre of the town, has a beautiful tower of red sandstone, 90 ft. high, and a fine peal of eight bells.

In the suburb of Llanfaes (the church in the fields) is St. David's Church, rebuilt in 1859. In this suburb, also in the river meadows of the Usk, is Christchurch College, formerly a Dominican priory of preaching friars.

It is an extremely interesting group of buildings, carefully and efficiently restored to the purpose to which at the dissolution of monasteries it was converted, viz., a seat of education. Though no longer possessing the privilege of conferring degrees, which has been transferred to Lampeter, it takes a high stand amongst the educational establishments of the Principality.

Parts of the old gateway, and quadrangle of the cloisters, and refectory remain, and the ancient church, mainly Early English, has been restored, and contains, with many other interesting monuments, those of three bishops of St. David's—Mainwaring, Lucy, and Bull, and of a lady, nearly related to the celebrated Sir David Gam. There is also an extremely interesting antique tombstone to the memory of a pilgrim to the Holy Land, John Hill, of Ameley, in Herefordshire, and an antique stone cross brought from the Aubrey chapel in the ancient church of St. Nicholas, destroyed so

completely in the Civil Wars that the site of it is unknown.

Twenty-three prebendal stalls were once ranged on either side of what is now the nave of Christchurch. There is only one monument later than 1806, and that is a tablet to the memory of the historian of Brecknockshire, Theophilus Jones, who died in 1812, and was interred at his native place, Llangammarch. On it is inscribed :—"This marble but recalls his name; the history of this, his loved, his native county, will long survive, and be his monument."

The gardens of the college are hard by the swiftly flowing Usk, which at this point is fordable, and is guarded on the opposite side by the picturesque ruins of the old Water-Gate, keeping silent watch and ward; now, all may come and go as they list, neither arrow nor broadsword will dispute their passage.

Of the ancient walls of Brecon, only fragments remain, but they were perfect until the Civil Wars. From ancient drawings we know that they were flanked by ten towers, some square, others semicircular, and that there were either five or seven gates. Leland gives the latter number.

The Memorial College, erected in 1869 to the memory of the 2000 clergymen of the Church of England who were ejected from their livings in 1662

—many of them for refusing to read the "Booke of Sportes" from their pulpits on a Sunday—is a fine Gothic building on an imposing site, and is used as a training college for Calvinistic ministers.

In a fine position close to St. Mary's Church there is a statue of the "Iron Duke," the work of Mr. Thomas, a native artist.

Thirteen miles east of Brecon is Crickhowell, the second town in size in the county. In passing we would observe that there are but four towns of any note in Brecknockshire—two on each of the two principal rivers—Brecon and Crickhowell on the Usk, and Builth and Hay on the Wye.

There are here, *cela va sans dire* (in Wales), the ruins of a castle:

> "Deserted towers! no steel-clad warder now
> O'erlooks with watchful eye the quiet vale."

Crickhowell owes its fame to its delightful situation—nearly in the centre of the lovely vale of Ystradwy (the vale of waters), on the banks of the sylvan Usk, winding in the shade of beech and chestnut woods, set in a generous and healthy soil, where road and river, hillside and meadows show Nature's lavish hand.

The name is generally accepted as being derived from Crug Hywel, or Table mountain, as it is often called, a flat-topped projecting knoll of the Breanog mountains, which overtops the town. On the ancient

road from Milford to London, Crickhowell is believed to have been built in the time of Howel Dda, A.D. 940. There is nothing interesting in the two long streets until they converge on the fine recessed bridge of fourteen arches, but the church and castle ruins are well worth a visit. The castle owes its origin to Sir Humphrey Burghill, who "came to the conquest of Brycheiniog with Bernard de Newmarch in the reign of Rufus." By intermarriage with the sons and daughters of their adopted country, this ancient, alien, and once-hated family is now represented by the truly Celtic family of Williams of Talgarth. One of them, Miss Jane Williams, wrote a very good and reliable history of Wales. Copies of her book are rare, and a reprint of it would be a great boon to historical readers.

Records exist telling us of the cruelty of these Norman lords of Crickhowell; they levied black-mail on their tenants, and fines and imprisonment fell like hail alike on the native Welsh and on their own kindred. "If a man," so runs the ancient chronicle, "enter the lord's parke, and there be found, he is to be kept in the stocks without the gate of the said parke, till he pays up, or else to lose his right hand."

Revenge, always smouldering, sometimes broke out in fierce flames, as in the murder of Richard de Clare, lord of Cardigan. To show his contempt

for the natives, he traversed the country accompanied only by his flute-player and singer. When passing through a wood near Crickhowell, ever since called Coed Dial (the wood of revenge), a party of Welshmen fell upon him, and though he and his musicians fought with all the bravery of their race, neither they, nor the retinue, who had hastened to the rescue, emerged alive from its gloomy thickets.

At the time of Owain Glyndwr's rebellion, Crickhowell Castle was held by Sir Grimbald Pauncefote, and it suffered severely from the fury of that patriotic fireband, and by the time of Queen Elizabeth it was a ruin. Now, a group of fine trees, on a tumulus-like mound, and graceful ivy shelter the forlornness of a few broken walls.

The church is dedicated to St. Edmund, king and martyr. This saint was put to death by a flight of arrows, and the origin of their use as weather-vanes is said to commemorate that event. According to legend his body mysteriously disappeared, and was in vain searched for by the monks. Years afterwards, a pious brother was meditating in the woods, when from the bushes near he heard a weak voice calling, "Here, here!" and proceeding to the spot, found the head of the martyr guarded by a wolf, who very quietly gave it up to him.

The church is cruciform, with transepts which were formerly the chantries of the Rumsey and Herbert

families. The tower is surmounted by the only spire in the county—low massive square towers, frequently crowned by a beacon turret, being the usual type. But St. Edmund's is Norman in its entirety. Restored by Lady Sibyl de Pauncefote in 1303, it contains her monument, and that of a cross-legged knight, believed to be Sir Grimbald, her husband. There are several other interesting memorials, that of Sir John Herbert and his lady bearing date 1660.

From the churchyard, planted with rose-trees, yews, and willows, shading the resting-places of the dead, the view over the glistening river and fertile vale, to the tree-crowned hills and stern mountains, is very lovely.

The old custom of decorating the graves on Palm Sunday, locally called Flowering Sunday, is kept up here, and in the adjacent parishes. The graves are carefully tidied, and the lettering of the stones cleaned beforehand, and the poor bring their crosses and crowns of primroses and daffodils, and the rich the choicest flowers of their greenhouses and gardens. The services of the day are well attended, for if no near relatives remain in the parish, their kin will come from afar to make these simple offerings of reverential love.

Another old custom long survived at Crickhowell, viz., the early matin service at three o'clock on Christmas morning, called The Plygain (morning

twilight). The Plygain candlestick, which with its long candle lighted so many generations of pious folk to this service of welcome to the Infant Jesus, is still carefully preserved in many a farm-house.

About a mile west of Crickhowell on the Brecon road is Llanfair (Mary Church). Here Giraldus Cambrensis was cited to appear on one of the numerous charges to which his peppery temper exposed him. Not a trace of the church remains. A huge tree-crowned tumulus (what a field for investigation!) is on the right of the road. On the left, the Cae-y-crochenydd (the potter's field) tells us of its use in ancient times.

The old town has had its share of fighting. Here Sir Richard Evans raised his standard, and with 3000 of the men of Brecknock marched to the help of Henry Tudor, and with him shared in the victory of Bosworth.

Southward from Crickhowell, on the other side of the river, the village of Llangattock is seen nestled at the foot of a range of limestone hills. Its church, dedicated to St. Cattwg, one of Brychan's numerous family, has some fine painted windows and a melodious peal of bells. Llangattock Park, belonging to the Duke of Beaufort, a modern house in a wood of ancient beech, is in the vicinity. In the hillside there is a small but curious cave called Eglwys Faen (the rock church).

At night the sky over these hills is often lit up by flashing lights like the Aurora Borealis, reflections from the iron-works that almost line the other, or Glamorganshire side. Llanelly and Brynmawr, two of these industrial hives, are within the county of Brecknock.

The bloody battle of Carno, fought A.D. 728, between Roderick, prince of North Wales, and Ethelbert, king of Mercia, has on its supposed site two huge cairns on this hillside.

Talgarth (pop. 1400) is midway between Brecon and Hay, on the river Llyfni, at the head of a very fertile district, and is a busy place, having large markets and seven annual fairs.

Near this town is Bronllys Tower (the tower of the palace brow), ancient and lone, with a fabulous history, for it has been called, "An imitation of the work of the first stonemasons after the Deluge who settled in Britain." Antiquarians, who often sadly lack imagination, say it is simply a round tower of the thirteenth century, built after the model of the keep of Pembroke Castle.

The broken earthworks of a British fort that commanded this vale eastward are seen on Dinas Hill.

Trecastle, Devynock, Llywel, and Llandulas, all in the western part of the county, are important villages, the centres of markets and of rural life.

The mountain tarns of this county are too numerous

to be named. The chief lakes are Pwll Bivey, near Capel Collwyn, Llyn-y-fan, near Trecastle, and Llyn Savadden (standing water), or Langorse, as it is more usually called, which is by far the largest, being five miles in circumference, and in parts more than two miles broad. It is set in the midst of lovely scenes, though a sadness often observed on the shores of lakes supplants the happy character of the adjoining Vale of Ystradwy. Giraldus Cambrensis, the gossiping Archdeacon of Brecknock in the twelfth century, calls this lake Clamosun, on account of the terrific noise it makes when the ice breaks up after winter storms; and legend tells us that it assumed a deep-red colour on the advent of the Normans, as an omen of coming misfortunes; and that whenever the rightful Prince of Wales shall stand on its banks, the birds from the neighbouring thickets will fly round him, and welcome his coming with rejoicing pæans. On St. John's Eve the fairies are said to put out in coracles of gossamer, and, diving into the depths of the lake, attend a Court ball given by the wraiths of the ancient inhabitants of a city buried beneath its waters, destroyed by earthquake in judgment on the cruel deeds of the lords of the land.

Scientific folk scatter this pretty story to the winds, and say that Langorse was the site of a crannoge, or lake-dwellers' village, that it has un-

doubtedly risen in level, and consequently those curious habitations became untenable, and gradually perished.

In a bend of the south shore of Langorse is the picturesque church of Llangasty Talyllyn (the church of St. Gastyn at the head of the lake), rebuilt by R. Raikes, Esq., of Treberfedd, a beautiful mansion hard by. The church has a melodious peal of bells, which have a very charming effect when heard from the water.

CHAPTER III.

THE WYE—TOWNS ON ITS BANKS, AND THE SURROUNDING DISTRICTS.

"Does thy heart beat high at action brave?
Go, gaze on the winding Wye;
'Twas the scene of Freedom's bloody grave,
And Llewelyn's latest sigh;
Ah! lightly deems the stranger cold
Of all our patriot brave of old."

The Wye (flowing water), a beauteous river teeming with memories, has a strange bewitching personality —more sad than gay, and combines, in a remarkable degree, the double characteristics of wild impetuosity and sylvan tranquillity. Brecknockshire only claims it as a boundary river on the north-east.

This "wanderer through the woods" is one of the five daughters of Plynlimon, the huge Montgomeryshire mountain. On three of them—the Wye, the Severn, and the Rheidol—the poet Lewis Glyn Cothi has composed a pennillion, of which one stanza says—

"From high Plynlimon's shaggy side,
Three streams in three directions glide;
To thousands at their sides who tarry,
Honey, gold, and mead they carry.
Flow also from Plynlimon high,
Three streams of generosity;
The first, a noble stream, indeed,
Like rills of Mona, runs with mead;
The second bears from vineyards thick,
Wine to the feeble and the sick;
The third, till time shall be no more,
Mingled with gold shall silver pour."

The Wye flows through flowery meadows, the happy hunting-ground of bees; the Severn through the country of the hop-vine; and the Rheidol turns the wheels of numerous lead-mines, wherein silver, and occasionally gold, is found.

Two miles from its source the Wye is joined by the Tarenig, a rapid stream, which, rising on the very summit of Plynlimon, is claimed by some as being the fountain-head, rather than a tributary, of that river.

Twisting and meandering, the Wye reaches Rhayader (the town of the cataract), and soon after enters Brecknockshire, receiving, on the right bank, the Elan (deer's brook), on its upper course called the Claerwen (the white shining water). This river forms, in part, the northern boundary of the county.

At Builth, the Ithon adds its waters to the Wye. This beautiful and important river rises in the

north-western corner of the county, and is quickly swelled by an unusual number of streams, the children of Drygarn (Druids' cairn), 2120 ft. high, and of Gorllwyn (head of the high white hill), 2012 ft., and of the wild hills around.

Below Builth, the Wye receives the Dihonw (the black flowing water), the Llyfni, and innumerable smaller streams.

(The tributaries of the left bank of the Wye belong to the topography of other counties.)

In July, 1853, a waterspout broke in the night over the glen of the Dihonw, and immense damage was wrought. Barns were levelled, cattle and sheep drowned, and a large farm-house was entirely destroyed, and every soul in it, to the number of six, either drowned or killed. Neither stick nor stone remained when the morning light revealed the disaster. One relic, however, still survives that awful flood. An old grandfather-clock in a carved case, and with a very handsome brass face, on the apex of which a bulbous-looking moon shows her quarterings, was carried from the kitchen of the farm-house by the swollen waters of the brook, and on into the Wye, where it floated unharmed for many miles. At length it was jammed in a little backwater, and, when discovered and landed, was found so little injured that, after trifling repairs, it was set up again, and continues to click the

moments to all who will listen to the double tale it tells.

As I have remarked, the Wye has two distinct characters. Between Rhayader and Builth, and as far as the great horse-shoe bend below Boughrood, it is a mountain river, "rushing through a singularly rocky and winding bed, bound in by lofty fantastic rocks and hills," and presenting an ever-varying series of picturesque views. At Hay, a few miles on, the Wye leaves Brecknockshire, and assumes its *alter ego*, which inspired Wordsworth to write his exquisite poem, "Lines written on revisiting the Wye."

The two principal towns on the Wye in Brecknockshire are Builth and Hay. Builth (population 1500) is of great antiquity, but the records of its history are scanty. The Romans have left their mark; the Danes harried and destroyed; the Normans conquered, ruled, and built a strong fortress, the only remains of which are grass-grown mounds on a commanding site. Who first reared its frowning walls, no one knows; and of some of its Norman occupants the stories are frightful.

The air of this town is delightfully salubrious, and the scenery around is enchanting. There is a railway, with direct communication with most parts of England and Wales, and plenty of accommoda-

tion for the numerous visitors who come here "to drink the waters," for Builth rivals its neighbour Llandrindod in the variety of its mineral springs—saline, sulphurous and chalybeate. The pump-room is in a lovely situation, and this may possibly assist in modifying the nauseous, though health-giving draught.

The church, shaded by fine trees, is modern, with the exception of its low, massive tower, and peal of bells. It has an interesting monument to John Lloyd, gentleman of the body-guard to Queen Elizabeth, and first high sheriff and justice of the peace after the division of Wales into counties. The hands of the effigy are turned towards the face, instead of being clasped together upwards, as is more general on ancient tombs.

There are several Dissenting chapels, and two good town-halls. Builth is very popular as a fishing-station. Salmon and trout abound in the rivers, and the otter affords excellent sport.

Pretty country seats, set in woods of oak and rare conifers, add a charm to the landscape. The geologist will also find much that is attractive; and for his information I would refer him to Sir R. Murchison's 'Siluria.'

To the patriot and to the historical reader, Builth is deeply interesting as being near the scene of the tragic death of the ill-fated Llewelyn

(lion of the lake), the last native prince of Wales. The story, as told by different writers, is a tangle of discrepancies; but certain facts stand out clear.

Edward I. of England had bent the energies of his stern relentless will on completing the conquest of Wales, but had found in Llewelyn ap Gruffydd, the reigning prince, a very stubborn feudatory. Llewelyn possessed unusual military genius, and the struggle was keen and bitter; though, with the superior wealth, power, and numbers of the English, there could be but one issue. Moreover, the heroic race of Arthur was weakened by constant wars and exactions.

And Llewelyn, to win his bride—the Norman beauty, Elinor de Montfort—had compromised himself and his patriotism. The marriage took place in October, 1278, and Edward and his queen, Elinor, not only graced the ceremony with their presence, but paid the cost of the festivities, and gave the bride a large dowry. The old Celtic empire of Llewelyn's forefathers lay passive, ebbing away its life at the bidding of love. Ere two years had flown, the sweet and gentle Elinor died, and, with her, the kindly influences which were binding the English and Welsh nations together.

Very soon treaties were broken, petty warfare renewed; and in the Lenten season of 1282, Lle-

welyn's unworthy brother, David, broke his parole, and, on the night of Palm Sunday, attacked and stormed Hawarden Castle with a body of Welsh troops, putting the unsuspecting inmates—who were either locked in sleep or keeping the fast of the "Truce of God"—to the sword, mortally wounding Roger Clifford, governor of the castle and high justiciary of Wales, and carrying him off in chains to Snowdon.

Llewelyn now joined his brother, and they soon found themselves at the head of a host of warriors—for the Welsh had risen in arms throughout the country—the spirit of their fathers flaming in their breasts.

Destroying castle after castle, and overrunning district after district, with indiscriminate rage and the violence of a whirlwind they marched north, and invested the newly-erected fortresses of Flint and Rhuddlan, the *only* strongholds left in the hands of the English.

The greatest consternation prevailed at the English Court when the astounding news reached it that the Welsh princes had thrown off the yoke, and unfurled the flag of freedom; but the king with calm wrath took his resolution to break for ever that lofty spirit which had already cost him so much.

Unmoved and sagacious, Edward marked carefully

every step he took, and his plans were laid with so much care that there was not a loop-hole for escape. First, he invoked the power of the Church, and an obedient pope and bench of bishops placed the Welsh princes under the ban of excommunication, a weapon more terrible than the sword. A fleet was sent from the English ports to cruise on the Welsh coast, and destroy any chance of help and food coming from Ireland. Castles were put into repair, pioneers made roads through dense forests, colliers and "cutters" came from the Forest of Dean under the command of Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, to assist the hatchet-men in cutting down the woods, and lavish rewards were given to both gentle and simple. A large body of troops entered South Wales, and the king himself at the head of another body of troops advanced from Chester, and, keeping along the level country, pressed the Welsh to retreat into the recesses of Snowdonia.

Here he halted, knowing well that the rivers and barren hills, though they barred his passage, were his allies; and thus Llewelyn, who had neglected to provide food for his troops, was caught in a trap. Two alternatives remained—famine, or the mercy of Edward.

To save the remnants of his people, Llewelyn submitted to very hard terms, and peace was again made between the two nations. Shorn of almost

every atom of kingly power, misfortune dogged the steps of the unfortunate prince.

During the weary warfare which we have briefly narrated, John Peckham, archbishop of Canterbury, who had reluctantly pronounced the edict of excommunication against Llewelyn, had endeavoured to reconcile the conflicting parties. A man of inflexible integrity and courage, and a pious Christian, he had spared neither time nor labour. In his charitable mission he made repeated journeys to and from London and Wales, addressing touching pastorals to both the chief combatants. To Llewelyn he wrote that he came into Wales "for the spiritual and temporal health of those whom he had ever loved well," and adds, "contrary to the will of our lord and king, whom our coming it is said doth much offend."

Archbishop Peckham was an old man, but he rode the whole way along what we should rightly designate frightfully bad roads, and through thick forests, never safe from surprise and attack by straggling bands—half soldiers, half robbers, who would have no respect for cowl or mitre, and caring naught whether the traveller was English or Welsh, provided he was rich, and his baggage mules well laden.

However, nothing but complete submission would satisfy the English king, and Archbishop Peckham's efforts were fruitless.

The end was near. It was the deep winter of 1282, and Llewelyn was literally in hiding at his hunting-lodge at Aberedw, near Builth, on the left bank of the Wye—the English troops on all sides. Locally he is said to have hidden in a cave, but for once historical research, and all true sons of Cambria who have seen the cave, will agree that tradition is not to be believed. No, Llewelyn did not skulk, but marched with a following of 2,000 men to meet his foes, and not being supported as he had expected by the garrison of Builth Castle, he employed a smith to reverse the shoes of his horse, snow covering the ground, and retreated towards the Epynt Hills. To the English, who soon afterwards arrived, the smith betrayed the secret, and Llewelyn and his soldiers were pursued, and in a hand-to-hand fight in a dingle three miles west of Builth, the brave and unfortunate prince was slain. His assailant, Adam Francton by name, did not know his rank, and it was only on his return from the pursuit of the flying Welsh, that he discovered whom he had killed. His real murderer was his countryman the smith, and for ages the deed was remembered by the epithet, "Bradwr Buallt" (traitor of Builth).

The dingle is still called Cefn-y-Bedd (the ridge of the grave); and there Llewelyn's body rests in an unknown bed, for his ruthless conqueror was deaf

to the entreaties of Matilda Longépée, countess of Salisbury, and of Edmund Mortimer, who, though Normans, felt the tie of kinship and Christian sympathy, and begged that he might be absolved from the sentence of excommunication, and his body laid in consecrated soil.

His head was sent to Edward, who had it placed, wreathed with a mock crown of laurel, on the battlements of the Tower of London.

A stone inscribed with his name is let into the outer wall of a fireplace in a farmhouse in Cefn-y-Bedd, the only monument to the memory of Llewelyn ap Gruffydd that his country has erected in six hundred years!

His only surviving daughter, Catherine Lackland, was sent to join her cousins, the daughters of David (who, betrayed by his followers, had suffered death at the hands of the executioner), in the convent of Sempringham, in Lincolnshire. She subsequently married Malcolm, earl of Fife.

The conclusion of the tragedy was a pageant, in which Edward rode in triumph through London, carrying in great state the regalia—or as much of it as had not been lost—placing part of it with his own hands on the high altar of Westminster Abbey, and the rest on the tomb of Edward the Confessor. Then assembling the Welsh chiefs who had aided him, to a grand tournament at Nevin, in North

Wales, he rewarded them by exemption from further military service except in their own cantrefs, and then not at their own charge.

The most interesting relic of the ancient Welsh regalia was the Croes Noddfa (cross of refuge), believed to be part of the true Cross of Christ. This relic, set in gold, together with other jewels, fell into the hands of the English on the betrayal of Prince David, in whose possession they were.

It was thought that some of the jewels of this regalia were sent to the Tower to be placed in the king's crown; but, if so, they have shared the same fate as everything that fell into Cromwell's sacrilegious hands, for no part of the Crown jewels now in the Tower are older than the time of Charles II.

On the Wye are situated the pretty villages of Llyswen (white palace), the favourite residence of Roderick the Great, and Glasbury (blue town). On a height above the river near the latter place is Maeslleuch, the palatial residence of a branch of the De Winton family.

At Hay—Haie (French), hedge, we quit Wales. This small town, with a population of about 1400, is on rising ground, charmingly situated. The castle was destroyed by Owain Glyndwr, but the manor-house, built on its site in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and now the rectory, is one of the most

picturesque houses in the county. The charities of this town are very numerous.

Brecknockshire is rich in mineral springs, for, besides those of Builth, Llanwrtyd Wells, on the river Yrfon, is justly popular, and in the same vicinity is Llangammarch, both with fine springs of sulphur and chalybeate, and also famous for salubrity of air and charming scenery.

On the banks of the Cammerch, is Llwyn Madoc (Madoc's grove), the seat of Miss Thomas, a beneficent friend and patron of the church in Wales.

A number of streams rise on the southern slope of Fforest Fawr, and on the Beacons, and after a short course enter Glamorganshire, and at the charming village of Pont Neath Vaughan, four confluent streams—the Meltè (darting water), the Hepstè (waving water), the Pryddin (productive stream), and the Sychrhyd (dry ford)—join the Nedd. These rivers flow through scenes of the richest beauty,—innumerable cascades and deeply-wooded ravines, overshadowed by steep and rugged hills—sylvan recesses that are not easy of access.

The falls of the Hepstè spring out in an arch that permits of a broad path under the fall, which in case of a shower is as good as an umbrella.

The curious cave of Porth-yr-Ogof (the gate of the cave) should be visited. It is near the picturesque village of Ystradfelltè (the vale of the Meltè), through

which runs the main road from Brecon to Neath. This highway possesses two distinctly different characters.

The eighteen miles of its course in Brecknockshire are wild and desolate; even farmhouses are few on its boggy moorland and chilly glens. Three miles north of Ystradfelltè it joins the track of the Sarn Helen, the great Roman road which traversed the heart of South Wales—from Neath (Nidum), viâ Brecon (Bannium), and several other stations, to Mediolanum—Meifod, in Montgomeryshire. Near the junction of the roads is the Maen Madoc, an ancient stone, with the inscription: "Dervaci filius Julii ic jacit." And at the highest point of the pass is the Maen Llia, which from its position can be seen for five miles. Antiquarians differ with regard to its origin—whether Druidical or Roman.

The river Sychrhyd, which forms part of the boundary between its native county and Glamorganshire, is overshadowed by the mysterious Craig-y Ddinas (the rock of the fort), one of the many fabled resting-places of King Arthur and his knights, who, sleeping peaceably for centuries, will nevertheless be roused by sound of trumpet on "The day when the red eagle and the black eagle shall go to war," which will be the time of Britain's sorest need. Fairies and goblins even in these degenerate days are seen by believers, holding high revels round the

rings of velvety turf on this huge limestone hill; but their visits are like angels, "few and far between," for what with the quarrying that is continually going on, and the "preaching of the Gospel," their dignity has been somewhat offended.

East and west of this romantic district are two rivers—the Tawe, which rises on Fforest Fawr, and after receiving numerous tributaries, enters Glamorganshire, and becoming an important river, ends by forming the harbour of Swansea. The other, the Taff, flowing from the western slopes of the Brecknock Beacons, enters Glamorganshire near Merthyr Tydvil, and passing the ancient city of Llandaff, and numberless iron-works and collieries, loses itself in the Severn Sea at Cardiff.

Brynmawr (great mountain), just within the south-eastern verge of the county, and in the vicinity of the many famous Glamorganshire iron-works and collieries, is in no way interesting to the tourist, unless by way of variety he desires to go down a coal-pit, or inspect a foundry. Certainly the contrast is great between the bare, soiled and treeless mountain, noisy and grim, and the glen of the Clydach close at hand, with its wooded banks and rocks, and its picturesque falls of Pwll-y-cwn (pool of dogs).

It is not possible here to enumerate the water-falls of Brecknockshire, for they are legion. Near

Pontsticill (bridge of the recess), on the Brecon and Merthyr Railway, is the romantic cascade of Pontsarn (bridge of the causeway), above which towers a lofty limestone cliff crowned by the ruins of Morlais Castle. With its rustic bridge, thirty feet above the rock-strewn river, the scene is enchanting on a sunny day. The woods of Cyfartha (hill junction) Castle stretch away in the distance, and Merthyr Tydvil lies beyond the heights.

Three miles from Penwyllt (wild head), on the Brecon and Neath Railway, in the midst of the wildest scenery, is Scwd-Hen-Rhyd (fall of the old ford), one of the finest waterfalls in South Wales. It is formed by the river Lech (flat-stone) falling over a grand cliff a hundred feet high. There is much to interest the geologist and botanist in this glen. Fossil trees of the class named *Sigillaria* have been found in the bed of the river, and uncommon ferns and mosses clothe the steep wet banks.

In an extremely wild and lonely hillside of this neighbourhood is Craig-y-Nos (rock of night), the residence of Madame Adelina Patti. Not only has she vastly improved the house and grounds, but throughout the whole district her name is revered for her generosity and kindness to the poor.

CHAPTER IV.

CHURCHES, HOUSES, CAMPS, MEN OF NOTE, ETC.

"We have no title-deeds to house or lands,
Owners and occupants of earlier dates
From graves forgotten stretch their dusty hands,
And hold in Mortmain still their old estates."

Brecknockshire possesses a rich share of ancient houses and manors, none perhaps more generally interesting than Newton, the birthplace of Sir David Gam (gam, crooked or squint-eyed), the hero of Agincourt, and the Fluellen (Llewelyn) of Shakespeare's 'Henry IV.' Is it only conjecture that derives the epithet game-leg from the same source as the hero's name? Newton Manor long continued the home of a race of brave and honest men, but their numerous descendants have generally turned their historic patronymic into Games. In great decay, and used as a farm-house, this ancient mansion still shows much of the symmetry of its original form. In Sir David's day it was called Castell Einion Sais (the castle of Einion the Englishman), from whom he was fourth in descent, and conse-

quently not a pure Cymry. In his youth his fiery temper brought him into collision with the lord of Slwch, whom he slew in the streets of Brecon, and being obliged to fly the country, he entered into the service of the House of Lancaster, of which he continued all his life a staunch and valiant follower. His epigrammatic report to Henry V. on the field of Agincourt is characteristic: "May it please your Majesty, there are men enough to be killed, men enough to be taken, and men enough to run away."

David Gam and Owain Glyndwr were contemporaries, and that they hated each other is evident from the endeavour on the part of the first to slay his rival at a council of the barons of Wales. He swore by "the nails of God" that he would kill him for rebelling against Henry IV. Glyndwr, ever ready, was quick with reprisals, and seizing his enemy, carried him off to a stronghold in the mountains. Returning into Brecknockshire, he burnt David's beautiful stone house, Poytins Castle, to the ground, and seeing one of his friends gazing mournfully at the ruins, he uttered the following taunting *englyn:*

"Shouldst thou a little red man descry,*
Asking about his dwelling fair,
Tell him it under the bank doth lie,
And its brow the mark of the flame doth bare."

* David was red-haired.

When Glyndwr's wrath cooled, he listened to the intercession of David's friends and released him, and shortly afterwards we find him following his master to the conquest of France, sealing his devotion with his life's blood. It was no abstract feeling of loyalty, but personal love, that led this sensitive Welshman, for, though of mixed descent, he possessed to the full the characteristics of his countrymen—a true friend, a thorough-going enemy.

Llandew, an abbreviation probably of Llanddewi (the Church of David), near Brecon, is one of the most ancient in Wales. It has been recently restored under the care and at the expense of J. R. Cobb, Esq., of Brecon, and is, on a small scale, a perfect example of a cruciform church, with a massive tower rising over the cross transepts like that of the Priory Church at Brecon. The windows are deeply recessed. On a tablet formerly on the east wall was the following pithy epitaph:

> "Weep not for we, our joy begins,
> But turn your tears on your own sins."

Close to the church was the castellated mansion of Giraldus Cambrensis as Archdeacon of Brecknock. A few old walls and part of a Gothic arch remain. Speaking of this place he says: "In my small residence near the castle of Brycheiniog, well-adapted to literary pursuits, and the contemplation of eternity, I envy not the riches of Crœsus, happy

and contented with the mediocrity which I prize far beyond all the perishable and transitory things of this world."

Doubtless when wandering round the quiet fields of Llandew, he would watch the reapers at their toil, and then in his garrulous fashion note it down in his 'Itinerary.' Did he ever think of the great interest his book, with its fund of observation, of research, and of anecdote, would have for the people of the centuries beyond? "The reapers," he tells us, "use blades of moderate length formed like a knife, and attached by a chain at each end to two handles, or staves, so as to play freely." A carving on a seat in Malvern parish church depicts this sickle and the strange manner in which it was used.

Giraldus also tells us that the ploughs of his day were drawn by four oxen each, and that the driver walked before his team with his face to them; so that, not seeing where he was going, he not unfrequently fell, and was injured by the heavy tread of the beasts.

Across the Honddu from Llandew is Pennoyre, the beautifully situated residence of Lady Cleasby.

Within the bounds of the ancient parish of Llanspyddyd (the Church of the Hospitium)—where, according to tradition, Brychan Brycheiniog was buried—three mansions, set in the midst of wild and lovely scenery, and of historic fame, still survive

though in modern guise: Penpont (bridge head), Abercamlais (mouth of crooked grey stream), and Aberbran (mouth of Raven river), all belonging to the family of Bullen, the Norman banner-bearer of Bernard de Newmarch. From him was descended Anne Boleyn, the beautiful but unfortunate wife of Henry VIII. Her portrait, one of many valuable relics, is preserved at Penpont, still the home of her family, though, both here and at Abercamlais, the ancient name is merged into that of Williams.

Yew trees cast a sombre shade over the two mysterious looking stones, which baffle the learning of antiquarians, in Llandefailog churchyard. In this parish is situated Castell Madoc, the residence of the Powels, who are descended from the ill-fated Bleddyn ap Maenach. Of the dress of a gentleman of this family, date 1620, the following description is amusing: "A green stuff coat, laid in the seams with silver cord, with a cloak of the same colour, trimmed with the like lace, and hat suitable to the same, and green worsted stockings."

From Llandefailog-tre'r-Graig (St. Madog's Church on a rock) came Queen Elizabeth's keeper of the jewels and "well-beloved" maid of honour, Blanche Parry.

In the parish of Cantreff (the hundred) lie the Beacons—stout parishioners; but, in the matter of pedigree, with a less clear record than a certain

parson of the place, who thus replied to a reviler: "And so, then, you think I'm no gentleman? Well, indeed, I'll answer you in few words. From Noah and his three sons sprang all mankind, and from one of them came the Parson of Cantreff."

Llanhamlech (the church of the flat stones), near Brecon, is dedicated to St. Peter; who, according to tradition, is said to have preached from a stone bearing his name, and still to be seen, built into the hedge on the Greenway side of the Abergavenny road, opposite Peterstone Court. The churchyard, abounding in rocks and stones, probably suggested St. Peter as a patron saint. Be that as it may, the "Court" has also retained its name, though the family of Walbeoffe—who lived on its site for successive generations, and whose numerous monuments in church and churchyard, on which are carved their names and arms, with floreated crosses of great beauty, and whose pious gifts attest to the wealth and the obligations of their position—have entirely passed away. This ancient family lived longer in the same house, and were settled on the same lands for a longer period, than any of the descendants of the Norman knights who helped Bernard de Newmarch in his conquest of the fair lands of Brychan. They never rose to distinction in court or camp, but filled with honour and credit their position as knights and country gentlemen for six centuries.

Some years ago a widow applied for relief to the guardians of a parish in the neighbourhood, giving her name as Walby. When questioned, she said her husband, who had been a collier, had changed it from Walbeoffe because their neighbours laughed at its strange sound. *Sic transit gloria mundi!*

In this parish is the Hermitage of St. Illtyd—a famous spot in the Middle Ages, for that saint was reverenced not alone as a missionary of Christ, but as a teacher of civilisation. The simple plough with which he taught the natives to turn the soil was in use for centuries, and called by his name, "St. Illtyd's plough." This holy man has met with detractors, and has been reviled for living in such a cramped hole as the Hermitage; but it has been grimly remarked that they, poor souls, now occupy a much narrower space.

There is scarcely a parish in the county without relic or legend of ancient houses, and of the men and women who have lived, and loved, and passed away. Near Talgarth is Porthhaml (the many-gated house). One stately portal, still intact, gives us some idea of the magnificence of this home of the Vaughans.

In the same neighbourhood is Gwernyfed (the place of alders), now a modern mansion, the residence of a family who trace their descent from Caradog Fraich Fras (Caractacus Strong-i'-th'-arm),

one of King Arthur's knights, who held the office of keeper of the Dolorous Tower—or who was, in other words, chief gaoler.

Buckland, on the Usk, is built on the site of an ancient manor-house of the Gams, ancestors of the present owner.

Slwch, near Brecon, was the house of the Aubreys, from whence came William, Judge and Master in Chancery, and who, dying in 1595, was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral. Another Aubrey uses the following pathetic expression in his will: "Humbly desiring you on the knees of my heart."

At Pontwilyn (the bridge of the gushing stream), now only recognised by a grass-grown moat, lived the knightly family of Havard—a name still heard in cottage homes.

In the parish of Cathedine (the land of the wretched captive), is the site of Blaenllyfni Castle. It was a ruin in Leland's time. Near Talgarth (head of the enclosure) is Trevecca (the house of Rebecca, an Elizabethan heiress). This mansion was bought and endowed, in 1752, by the celebrated Lady Huntingdon, the friend of Whitfield, as a theological college for Calvinistic Methodists.

The founder of this sect was Howel Harris of Tregunter, originally the home of the Gunters, to whose ancestor, Peter Gaunt d'Or, the manor was given by Bernard de Newmarch. From them it

passed to the Harrises, whose tenure was of short duration.

Howel, the youngest of three brothers, all men of distinction, will always be honoured, even by those who most differ from his opinions.

Destined for the Church, he was led by the preaching of Whitfield to carve out for himself a new scheme of salvation and church discipline. His eloquence roused the spiritual life that lies deeply rooted in the soul of every Welsh man and woman, and his doctrines spread like wild-fire through the Principality. Whatever may be the merits or demerits of the powerful sect he established, he was a "shining light" in his generation, "an unselfish worker, a sincere enthusiast; the rather erratic course of whose life-stream was largely determined by the rigid obstructions and formalities of an age and condition of things in the Church of England which happily have nearly passed away."

Porthmawr (the great gate), the ancient residence of the Herberts at Crickhowell, retains a fine and picturesque tower, the archway of which frames in an enchanting view of the Usk valley; with Glanusk, set in a lovely park, beside the winding river,—Penmyarth House, on the sloping ground above, and luxuriant woods, hills, and fantastic mountain peaks.

Tretower Castle (place of the castle) and Manor

House are in the parish of Llanvihangel Cwmdû, two miles west of Crickhowell.

The castle, a picturesque ruin of a border tower, was built by the Norman family of Picard, to whom the land was given after the Conquest, and was successively the home of the Herberts, Vaughans, and Gams, all related to each other.

When times were more settled, and warfare giving way to softer manners and habits, the rough accommodation of the rudely-built castle was abandoned, and the lords of Ystradwy raised for themselves the fortified manor-house hard by; which, though now in decay, and occupied as a farm, possesses many points of the highest interest to the antiquarian and the tourist. In the pretty little church—rebuilt by Sir J. R. Bailey, to whom the property accrued—there is introduced some features of the fifteenth century work of this house—notably the roof of the nave, which is a copy of that of the great hall.

The Vaughans, whose chief seat was at Tretower, were a brave and courtly race. Of the trio of Brecknockshire heroes who fell at Agincourt, one was Sir Roger Vaughan. (The other two were Sir David Gam and Sir Humphrey Llwyd.) Of this family came Henry Vaughan, the Silurist—so named from the province of his birth, the land of the Silures. He was a poet of the highest culture, and of the sweetest, tenderest touches of true

poetic fire. Contemporary with George Herbert, "the sweet singer of the Temple," and descended from a common ancestor, Gwladys Gam, he possessed much of the same quaint spiritual nature, while his appreciation of and insight into nature's works is superior; and at that time this thoughtfulness was most uncommon.

Even to many who have visited the scenes of surpassing loveliness in the midst of which he lived, and which he so fondly described, his poetry is a sealed book. How sweetly he rhymes of the "chrystal Usk," when "watching for the morning hue," he steals forth:

> "It was high spring, and all the way
> Primrosed and hung with shade."

And then notes with tender bursts of faith the love of God for His creatures, and the pathetic struggling with the sorrows of life, "touched to higher things." Oblivion hung over the poet and his poetry for nearly two centuries. A striking instance of this occurred but a few years since on the re-opening of the church of the parish of Llansantffraid, near Brecon, in which he was born, and in which he had lived the greater part of a long life. Devotion to church and king breathes throughout his writings; his gravestone was in the churchyard, engraved with his name and the date of his death, 1695, and yet in the large representative gathering of the clergy and

laity of the neighbourhood, and in the course of several speeches, no single speaker mentioned the name, or in any way referred to, Henry Vaughan! Scholars now and then tell the world what a mine of purest gold lies concealed in his poetry. Perhaps the want of a popular edition of his works accounts for much of this neglect. Matthew Arnold says of him—

> "Keep fresh the grass upon his grave.
> Oh, Usca! with thy living wave
> Sing him thy best; for few or none
> Hear thy voice right, now he is gone."

With 'The Bird,' a sweet little poem of Vaughan's, typical of his style, I will conclude this rather too long notice of the poet for the limits of my work.

> "Hither thou com'st. The busie wind all night
> Blew through thy lodging, where thy own warm wing
> Thy pillow was; and many a sullen storm,
> For which coarse man seems much the fitter born,
> Rained on thy bed,
> And harmless head;
> And now as fresh and cheerful as the light,
> Thy little heart in early hymns doth sing."

The church of Llansantffraid, to which we have referred, is dedicated to Saint Freda, or St. Bride, as she is variously called. She lived in the seventh century, and no less than nineteen churches in Wales are dedicated to her honour.

Pre-historic remains are comparatively rare in

Brecknockshire, but unquestionably of extreme interest is the Gaer Benni, "the cradle of Brecon, the site of counsel and rule, of princely residence and mortal combat long before Rome sent her legionaries across the British Channel;" it was for centuries the rallying point of Celtic kings and rulers. There the Roman general, Ostorius Scapula, founded the important station of Bannium, from which radiated five military roads. On these paved causeways, legions were continually passing, sometimes hurrying by forced marches to the relief of beleaguered garrisons, sometimes to put down a revolt of the natives. Planted in the very midst of the foe, the activity of military life at Bannium was incessant.

Released from Rome's iron rule, the native chiefs again set up their standards in their old camp. In time they were once more ousted by a foreign enemy; but the Norman Bernard, fearing the prophecy which foretold that the spot would bring him sorrow, removed the stones of the fort and built his castle on the banks of the Honddu. Fragments of ancient masonry and grass-grown hillocks mark the site of this renowned camp.

A little north of Benni is the Megalith, called Maen-morwynion (the maidens' stone), with sculptured figures representing a Roman soldier and his wife.

In the same vicinity is Pen-y-Crug, on which are the remains of an oval camp once strongly defended by triple entrenchments, and commanding an outlook over the entire district.

At Llanfrynach, near the left bank of the Usk, portions of a Roman villa were unearthed in 1775. They were destroyed by the vandalism of the occupiers of the land; but from a drawing taken of it, we are led to infer that it was the summer residence of some high official. Here he could repose when wearied with the constant drill and bustle of the camp at Bannium.

The site of another Roman station in this county is also of great interest. It is in the parish of Llanvihangel Cwmdû (the Church of St. Michael of the black valley). The appellation "black valley" is a misnomer, for this lovely vale is cheerful and very fertile. The historian Llwyd says the right word is Cwmdê (the south vale); for lying south of Talgarth, and forming with it part of the lordship of Ystradwy, it would be to that broad and important district the southern outlet. A more ancient name was Llanvihangel Tref-y-Caerau (St. Michael's church in the forts), and this perhaps best represents it; for besides the Roman Gaer on the Via Julia,—the great road from Isca Legonium (Caerleon) to Maridunum (Caermarthen); —British forts crowned the adjacent hills of

Pentir (head of the land) and the Myarth (cattle pasture). It is strange that so little exploration has been made at these places. Fragments of bricks, pottery, and cement are frequently met with; year by year the plough and the frost break up and blend them with the soil, and soon nothing will remain. Quantities of a species of tutsan, called in Welsh, Llysieuyn-gwaed-gwyr (the herb of the blood of men), is found in the neighbourhood of the Roman camp, and legend says that it only grows where blood has been shed.

Cwmdû Church, finely situated, with a massive beacon-turreted tower, contains a few interesting monuments, and the remains of a beautifully carved rood-screen, now placed against the eastern wall.

Outside the church on the south wall is inserted one of the most curious of incised stones, with the following inscription: "Catacus hic jacit Filius Tegernacus." This capital mode of preservation was adopted by the Rev. T. Price, the Welsh historian and bard, better known as Carnhuanawc, who was for thirty years rector of Cwmdû.

This romantic village, sheltered by its guardian hill of Penglog-y-pibydd (the piper's skull), is on the charming little river Rhiangel which, two miles east, passes Tretower, already referred to, and falls into the Usk at the Tower bridge in Glanusk Park, the residence of Sir J. R. Bailey, M.P., Lord-Lieutenant

of the county. Surrounded by beautiful gardens, and set in a park of fine trees beside the flowing river, this house is replete with interest: Burmese armour, and trophies captured from slave-dhows, by an uncle of the present baronet; pictures by the Welsh artist, Penry Williams, better known as "Roman Williams," from his long residence in the capital of Italy; and, as much prized as anything, a first folio edition of Shakespeare, which with an illuminated missal, and other ancient books, was discovered in the attics of an old house, bought with all its contents by the owner's grandfather. The missal is much mutilated, the parchment having been cut away apparently for luggage-labels. The history of the Shakespeare is unknown; but tradition affirms that the great play-writer was a friend of the Vaughans, and a branch of that family lived at Trebinshon (the house of Little John), where the book was found, and further, that he conceived the story of his 'Midsummer Night's Dream' while wandering in Cwm Pweca (the glen of goblins), near Crickhowell, and to have named his goblin sprite after it.

Surrounded by a group of trees in Glanusk Park is the famous Turpilian Stone. The inscription—"Turpilii hic jacet Enneri Triluni Dunocati"—is of the faulty character common to these Welsh-Latin memorials. When discovered, this stone was in use as a foot-bridge across a brook.

A short distance from the house, in an enchanting situation above the Usk, is Penmyarth Chapel, the last resting-place of the family.

Sir Joseph and Lady Bailey recently celebrated their silver wedding by giving the village a parish room, and the site chosen—near the church—necessitated the removal of a roofless and very dilapidated dwelling, of no antiquarian interest, but traditionally said to have been the residence of a scion of the house of Vaughan. A thick gold wedding or posy ring was found in the stones of the ancient chimney. On the under rim is legibly inscribed, "I joye to finde a joyeful minde." The pickaxe obliterated the hall-mark, if ever it had one, but experts say that it belongs to the time of Queen Anne. It was given to the writer of this book, and is one of her most treasured possessions.

But who was the happy bride who owned it in the long ago? Who was the bridegroom who placed it on her trembling finger in the radiant spring-time of youth and hope? joying to find a joyful mind with whom to travel life's pathway.

Buried in the mountains north of Crickhowell is Patrishow Church (the portion of St. Ishow), possessing a beautifully carved rood-screen of Irish oak, temp. Henry VII., and an ancient font with the inscription, "In tempore Gynillyn meilier mefecit." This Gynillyn was the son of Rhŷs Goch, lord of

the district in the time of Henry I. A short distance from the church there is a bridge over the swift Gwryney-fawr, called Pont-yr-Esgob (the bishop's bridge). From it, Archbishop Baldwin, accompanied by his archdeacon, the indefatigable Giraldus, preached to the wondering natives the first Crusade for the recovery of Jerusalem.

On the Gwryney-fechan is Llanbedr (Peterchurch). Here it was formerly the custom, on the death of a parishioner, for the sexton to strike each bell of the peal in the old tower with a mallet, twice round for a woman, three times for a man, and then the tenor bell was rung almost without ceasing until the funeral. Rather a dismal proceeding!

In the early part of this century, the Rev. H. T. Payne, noted for his literary and antiquarian research, was rector of Llanbedr, and Archdeacon of Brecknock. He has left a minute description of the churches within his jurisdiction, after the manner of his famous predecessor.

With two mediæval stories told by that predecessor, who was so delightful a mixture of shrewdness and credulity, we will conclude our very imperfect visitation of the parishes of Brecknockshire.

Amongst the hills of the north-east of the county is Llanafon-vawr (the big church by the water), and there, in the reign of Henry I., a great and wicked lord, to show his contempt for things

spiritual, spent a riotous night in company with his hounds. In the morning he was stone-blind, and the dogs were mad. After a year of darkness and reflection, he caused himself to be conveyed to the Holy Land, and there, accoutred in full armour, he ran a tilt with the pagans. Falling mortally wounded at the moment of victory, he was blessed with the return of sight. Assoiled and forgiven, he was buried at Jerusalem with great honour—a repentant son gathered into the arms of Holy Church.

The other is of a superstitious dance at St. Almedha's Church, near Brecon.

In the beginning of August the parishioners assembled in the churchyard, round which they danced in a ring, singing as they went. Then, on a sudden falling to the ground as in a trance, then jumping up in a frenzy, they would each represent with their hands before the assembled people whatever work they had unlawfully done on the feast-days of the past year. One man would mimic the action of following the plough, another would goad oxen, singing meanwhile the field-song of his family. Others would imitate the work of the shoemaker, or tanner, or weaver; and it was not until they were brought into the church and up to the altar that the frenzy left them. This custom was without doubt adapted from the ancient festival

of the different laborious professions, which, according to the 'Brut,' was of Druidical origin, as old as the time of King Lear. The recovery at the altar was an addition of the early Christian missionaries.

In the chapter on rivers reference is made to Llangammarch. This parish is noted as having been the birthplace of several Brecknockshire worthies. John Penry, the martyr, born in 1559—the "Morning Star of the Reformation in Cambria"—was one: a brave and pious clergyman, who endeavoured by preaching and writing to rouse his countrymen and the authorities in England to the disgraceful neglect of religion in Wales. He was thrown into prison for his pains. At last liberated, he pursued more eagerly than ever his efforts for reform. One of his projects was for the employment of laymen to preach and assist in the services of the church. It is curious to record this at a time (1889) when in solemn Convocation a similar scheme is received with the cordial approval of bishops and high dignitaries. Again he was brought to trial, and, unfortunately for him, his writings were issued from the same press as the seditious Mar-Prelate tracts—tracts defying law and order, and especially the Queen (Elizabeth), and her authority in matters civil and ecclesiastical. He was accused of being their author. This he denied, and repeated his

often-expressed respect and regard for the Queen, but his word was of no avail, and he was condemned to death, and brought "to the place of execution on the side of the river Thames, and there hanged."

From his prison he wrote to his children, "I have left you four Bibles, each of you one, being the sole and only patrimony or dowry that I have for you . . . and learn to read, my dear children, that you may be conversant day and night in the word of the Lord."

The brothers James and Thomas Howel were the sons of a curate of this parish. The former, who died in 1660, and was buried in the Temple Church, was a distinguished traveller, and author of the delightful poem, 'Dordona's Grove.' Thomas became Bishop of Bristol, and was so beloved, that at his death the inhabitants craved permission to have the care and education of his children.

Theophilus Jones, the historian of Brecknockshire, was also a native of Llangammarch, and the grandson of the Rev. Theo. Evans, the discoverer of the mineral springs of that place.

Dr. Coke, the friend of Wesley and the Apostle of Wesleyan Missions, was the son of a medical man at Brecon. His zeal and labours were incessant, and he crossed the Atlantic eighteen times, which was truly marvellous in the days of sailing vessels. He died at sea, on his way to Ceylon, and was buried in mid-ocean. A tablet in the Priory church com-

memorates his worth, and the "Dr. Coke Memorial Schools" testify to the appreciation of his diligent and heroic life.

Dr. Hugh Price, founder of Jesus College, Oxford, was born in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the son of a wealthy butcher of Brecon. He was prebendary of Rochester, and treasurer of St. David's. Dying in 1574, he was buried in the Priory church of his native town.

Evan Thomas, F.S.A., the sculptor, was also a native of Brecon, and Hugh Thomas, the "Breconshire Herald," came from Llanfrynach. He was Garter Principal King at Arms in 1703, and an ardent antiquarian.

Penry (Roman) Williams was a native of Breconshire.

The Rev. D. Williams, the "Patriarch of Wales," a Nonconformist minister of note, was born near Llanwrtyd. He was a man of great mental and physical powers, riding night and day (it is computed that he spent ten years in the saddle), and preaching almost daily to enormous crowds.

Archdeacon and Major Davies was Vicar of Brecon for fifty years, and an officer of volunteers at the time of the great wars with the French under Napoleon Bonaparte; a good and earnest Christian, Archdeacon Davies' name will always stand in the annals of his native county as one of her worthiest sons.

In 1755, Mrs. Siddons, the celebrated actress, was born in Brecon, while her parents were on a professional tour.

Of the family of Price in Brecknockshire two members are historic. At his house, the Priory, Brecon, Sir Herbert Price entertained, or rather gave refuge to, Charles I. on the night of August 5th, 1645, on his flight from Naseby Field.

To Sir John Price, also of the Priory, Wales is believed to owe its union with England. If not the author, he was undoubtedly the chief promoter of the scheme. A great favourite at the Court of Henry VIII., he was one of the Council in the Court of Marches, also one of the Commissioners of the Survey of the Monasteries in South Wales. He showed great sagacity in politics and had great influence. He wrote a history of Wales, and it is conjectured that Shakespeare got his knowledge of that country in great measure from him. Sir John, who died in 1573, is said to have feathered his nest from the spoils of his native country, and to have had an eye for antiquities as well as land. In the course of the performance of his office, as one of the investigators into the affairs of the Priory of Black Canons at Caermarthen, he obtained possession of a MS. which had belonged to the said Priory. This was one of the few ancient books of Wales, and known as The Black Book of

Caermarthen. It was written in the twelfth century, and consists of historical poems extremely interesting as illustrating the manners and customs of that remote period. It is now in the collection of W. W. E. Wynne, Esq., of Peniarth.

And, as becomes its dignity, Brecon can boast almshouses and of numerous doles that attest to the charity of by-gone generations. The old town-hall has been reconstructed, and presented as a jubilee gift to the inhabitants by the mayor, Col. Morgan. There is also a prison and a barracks, and the various institutions which contribute to the "light and sweetness" we seek in these days. Our steps seem to halt considerably in the pursuit.

The years 1889 and 1890 mark periods in the history of Brecknockshire. In September of the former year the meetings of the National Eisteddfod took place in the county town. They were most successful, and vast crowds assembled daily for a week to witness the musical contests, and other proceedings; and though disappointed of the presence of the Prince and Princess of Wales, for the hope of which bardic tradition had been set aside, and the assembly postponed from August, and certain astronomical combinations, the greatest patriotism and enthusiasm prevailed. None of those who were present will forget the scene, when the Queen of Song, Madame Adelina Patti, sang the solo of the

heart-stirring "Land of my Fathers," the chorus swelled by the voices of the thousands who thronged the Pavilion.

The succeeding September (1890) His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence and Avondale, the eldest son of the Prince and Princess of Wales, honoured the county with a visit, as the guest of the Lord Lieutenant, Sir Joseph Bailey, of Glanusk, for the purpose of attending the Agricultural Show held in Brecon.

The announcement of his intended visit was received with the utmost interest and pleasure, it being felt that though the Prince and Princess of Wales had been unable to come into Wales the year before, they had not forgotten how much their presence had been desired, and had sent their son. The Prince was welcomed with the greatest enthusiasm—from all parts crowds poured into Brecon, and all classes joined in giving him a Welsh welcome, which for genuine warmth and cordiality is not to be excelled. After a visit to Cardiff, where his reception was very flattering, he returned to Glanusk, and, to the delight of the people of Crickhowell and the neighbourhood, laid the foundation stone of a new town-hall in that town, a ceremony never before performed in Wales by a prince of the Royal Family.

Caernarvonshire. YR EIFL (THE RIVALS) FROM THE BEACH AT NEVIN.

CAERNARVONSHIRE.

CHAPTER I.

"O Gwynedd! famed for princes and for songs,
No shame from Gruffydd's sons will soil thee—
Hawk of battle, Perroddwlad's glory be."

The ancient name of this district was Arfon—over-against, or near Mon (Anglesey)—and its present designation arose from the British Gaer (camp) in Arfon, now the site of the county town and castle.

Caernarvonshire is about fifty-five miles long and twenty-three miles broad, and has the sea on all sides except the east and south-east, where the counties of Denbigh and Merioneth form the boundaries. The northern shore is guarded by the Irish Sea and Beaumaris Bay, the southern by Cardigan Bay, the west by Caernarvon Bay, and the north-west by the Menai Straits.

The latter separates it from Anglesey, of which it was in remote ages a part. The population of this county was 95,694 at the last census. It

returns three members to Parliament, viz., for the boroughs of Caernarvon, Eifion, and Arfon respectively.

The peninsula of Lleyn stretches seaward for upwards of twenty miles, between the bays of Caernarvon and Cardigan, and has on its northern flank a range of hills, the highest, Yr Eifl, having an elevation of one thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven feet, but the greater part is a fertile undulating valley, irregular in breadth. The railway from Caernarvon to Wenafon, or Tremadoc Bay, divides Lleyn from Snowdonia.

"Cold is the snow on Snowdon's brow,
It makes the air so chill;
For cold, I trow, there is no snow
Like that of Snowdon's hill.
A hill so chill is Snowdon's hill,
And wintry is his brow;
From Snowdon's hill the breezes chill
Can freeze the very snow."

Snowdonia, with its beautiful mountains and sequestered vales, is visited every year by thousands, and it is the aim of the hardy tourist to ascend the graceful and majestic king of hills, Y Wyddfa (the conspicuous one). Snowdon, by which it is more generally known, is a generic term for the whole range, and is a literal translation of the Saxon Snawdun (snow mountain). The native name is Eryri (snowy heights), and though some philologists

derive it from Eryr (eagle), the long winter snows make the former a more appropriate meaning.

Of the three best known ascents of this mountain, the Llanberis route is very easy, and can be made on ponies the whole way.

By Capel Curig, courage and skilful climbing is required; and by Beddgelert—less adventurous than the latter, and more picturesque than the former—the ascent is fairly within the powers of an ordinary pedestrian.

We took the last-named route, travelling the first four miles in the Pont-Rhyd-du coach, and were deposited—alpenstocks, wraps and luncheon-basket, —on the high road near a huge rock called Pitt's Head, from a supposed resemblance to the celebrated statesman. A guide was awaiting us, for being only ladies we had been prudent. He slung our impedimenta over his shoulders, and we started on our trudge; the "brigand"—as we dubbed our guide from his picturesque costume of blue linsey and a Tam-o'-Shanter cap—entertaining us with stories of a seafaring life. The sun was very hot, and we were glad of the shelter of some rocks, while one of the party sketched Llyn Cwellyn, which lay like a shield of embossed silver in the vale below, the gorse and heather on Castell Cidwm (Wolf's Castle) in bold relief. The path was rough from loose stones and very fatiguing, but at last we reached "the ridge," about

which we had heard a good deal, and we were glad to keep close to the "brigand" while crossing it. The path is broad, and blocks of stone guard the edge, and it can only be really dangerous in a very high wind, or thick mist; but the scene is grand, and very awe-inspiring, for immense hollows lie on either side. It is said that a stone dropped right and left over the edge, would be half a mile apart when they touched the bottom. The "ridge" safely crossed, the topmost peak was disclosed, and against the sky-line a string of ponies coming up with tourists from Llanberis, and shortly our four miles' climb was ended, and we stood on the summit.

Hot, breathless, and fatigued, we scarcely noted our surroundings, but dived into the luncheon-basket, and also put on our cloaks, for the air was sharp and cold.

But the grandeur of the scene woke in us the profoundest wonder. The atmosphere was clear all round. Mountains, hills, and lakes, peaceful valleys, winding rivers, and green woods, repeating themselves over and over again, melting gradually into the hazy blue of distance. The nearer view was of steep, abrupt outliers of rock, which pierced the air in jagged cliffs, and of vast hollows, many of them filled with water. These tarns were strangely weird and impressive—sometimes gleaming in the sunlight like burnished mirrors; sometimes black

and still, until a breath of air would change their surface into rippling wavy lines of silver, obliterating the clear reflections of the mountains.

Y Wyddfa, three thousand five hundred and seventy-one feet above the level of the sea, is composed of the oldest and hardest rocks, and is surrounded by four mountains nearly as high, separated from each other by enormous ravines. Eastward, towards Capel Curig and its shining lake and wooded glen, is one of these sentinels, Crib-y-Pistyll (dripping peak), and beside it is Crib Goch (red peak). A little to the south are two others—Llyn Llydaw, and the ridge of Lliwedd, with the vale of Gwynnant beyond.

The narrow space at the top was crowded with tourists, some clustering round the cairn in the centre, others refreshing themselves in the two hideous-looking huts. Below, in the shelter of a rock, ponies were tethered, and the whole scene was very animated and very incongruous in this vast solitude.

Presently we were joined by some friends whom we had been watching as they toiled hand over hand up the rock-strewn sides of Cwm-y-Llan.

Unperceived by us a change had taken place in the weather, and suddenly the whole landscape westward was blotted out—grey rolling clouds swept along below us with a silent force that was

wonderfully impressive, while as yet we were in the clear blue of the vaulted sky.

Sometimes for a moment a rift would open, but the vapour quickly thickened up again, and all was blank.

The "brigand" appeared, and he was evidently uneasy, and it dawned upon us that the crowd had lessened—people were going away fast; so we also prepared for the descent.

We crossed the "ridge" quickly, lingering occasionally to pick a tuft of parsley fern, or a rare alpine flower, and to listen to the sound of falling stones, or to a short lecture on geology with illustrations at hand from the savant of the party.

But the "brigand" from afar looked back, and beckoned to us with hands uplifted towards the sky; so we hastened on, and in a few minutes we understood his meaning. The black clouds which had been trailing over the heads of Moel Siabod and Aran were parted by lightning and shaken by thunder. It was magnificent to watch the play of light along the precipitous sides and yawning *cwms*, and to hear the angry growl, that sounded like the artillery of giants. We were out of the storm, and could enjoy the wondrous spectacle, but it was veering towards Beddgelert, our destination, and it was plain that the majesty of Snowdon, insulted by man daring to penetrate the secrets of his lonely heights, was going to punish us.

We shall none of us ever forget that first flash of forked lightning that struck near us, and the thunder that instantly followed. Then the rain came down in sheets, as we stumbled and scrambled over the stones, and the dreary sloppy bog with its patches of drowned-like cotton grass and melancholy reeds.

We had timed our descent to meet the coach on its return journey; but when we reached the high road, there was no sign of it. For awhile we sheltered under a low wall, but soon we were ankle deep in water, and the road was a running stream. The earth seemed actually to tremble at the terrific crashes which succeeded each other rapidly—the angry reverberations rolling away from hill to hill. Then, instead of the zigzag lightning which had seemed almost to touch us, we were startled by that unusual phenomenon—globular lightning, or fireballs.

Instead of a flash, a ball of fire rolled slowly along the ground—away from us fortunately—and then burst with great violence, darting into the air in rays like the spokes of a wheel.

After this, inaction was impossible. Drenched and frightened we started to walk homewards, hoping to be overtaken by the coach, but it was not until we were within a mile of Beddgelert, that we heard the welcome sound of wheels.

A more draggled party never was seen, though

people in curious, woebegone plight are a common sight in these regions; but warm fires and dry clothes, followed by hot tea and a good supper, and we were again a merry company.

After the subjugation of Wales by Edward I., the then densely-wooded mountains of Snowdonia were converted into a royal forest, but long before that period they had been the hunting-ground of the Welsh princes, who were greatly attached to sport of every kind. The Welsh Court migrated from place to place through Gwynedd (North Wales), and by the old laws provision was made for the maintenance of horses, hounds, and servitors to attend the king and princes in their hunting expeditions. The numerous grass-grown sites and scanty remains bearing the name of Llys (palace), in the neighbourhood of Snowdon, attest to its ancient popularity.

This region is also very strong in a military point of view, for a range of lofty mountains extend from sea to sea—viz., from the Great Orme's Head and Penmaenmawr, near Conway, to Yr Eifl, at the end of the peninsula of Lleyn; and rivers rapid and deep, only crossed by treacherous fords, formed an almost equally strong barrier to the foe. The Conway bounded it on the east, and the shifting sands and tidal reaches of Traeth-mawr on the south.

The principal defiles which opened into this wild land were commanded by strong forts, from the ruins of which we now look down on happy peaceful scenes—the reverse of the savage shouts and clash of arms which resounded when their walls were high and strong.

Snowdonia has many claims to historical interest. It was the battle-ground of freedom and the last refuge of its patriots. Carnedd-Llewelyn and Carnedd-Davydd preserve in their names the memory of the two princes who retreated to their fastnesses when hard pressed by the army of Edward I.

Heaps of stones crown the summits of nearly all these hills, many of them ruins of the temporary refuges of the natives.

The Glyder-fawr and the Glyder-fach have graceful outlines, hiding between them the pretty valley of Y Waen-Oer (cold moor), and from the ridge of Black Ladders—the great mountain wall connecting the two Carnedds to which we have just referred,—very fine and extensive views are obtained.

Eastward are the peaks of Mynydd-Mawr (great hill), and Craig Coch (red crag), and Moel Hebog (hill of the hawk). Indeed, mountains of every size and picturesque outline fill the land; "the country around is like unto the fragments of an unfinished world."

Geologists tell us that Snowdon was once seven times higher than it is now, that the powers of nature—the ice and snow, and abundant rains of millions of years—have worn away all but the hardest rocks; and that torrents, bursting from the heart of the hills, have carried away what débris has not settled as valleys, now green and fertile, in the hollowed clefts.

These torrents, widening into rivers as they twisted and curled through every opening, found their way to the great and wide sea. Man followed these winding rivers, made roads and railways; and, in time, peace—of which no greater blessing God has given to man—came to the land.

The rivers of Caernarvonshire are numerous, though short, owing to the nearness of the mountains from which many of them rise, to the sea. A few flow from lakes.

The Conway is the longest, not only in this county, but in North Wales; and, throughout its entire length of thirty miles, it is beautiful. It rises in a lake of the same name at the extreme south-east of Caernarvonshire, and, after flowing south for a few miles, turns north-east, where it is joined by the pretty Serw. The first place of interest after this is Yspytty Ivan, where, in the Middle Ages, there was a sanctuary of the Knights of St. John. This fell from its high estate, and

became the resort of a gang of robbers, who continued so long the terror of the country-side that Meredydd, Lord of Dolwyddelan, got together a band of his tenants, and, offering them rewards, they soon hunted down the thieves.

The Conway forms the boundary between Caernarvonshire and Denbighshire, and the valleys on either side are fair and fertile. Two or three streams swell its flood as it winds round the bases of the hills, and at the point where the Meredw joins it, it turns sharply to the north-west, and is further increased by the Avon and the Huch, both natives of Denbighshire. On the Caernarvonshire side it receives the Eidda and the Machno, and, lower down, the Lledr and the Llugwy. The scenery, both by road and river—which are nearly parallel—is glorious all the way to Bettws-y-Coed. The falls of the Conway and the Machno, near the confluence of those rivers, are very fine. Near Penmachno a curious incised gravestone to the memory of King Carausius was found some years since; the inscription, translated, is, "Carausius lies here in this heap of stones."

This king was the founder of the British navy, and lived about A.D. 288. During his reign, Britain was the greatest naval power in the world. His fleets swept the seas from the mouth of the Rhine to the Straits of Gibraltar; and he was feared and

shunned alike by Saxon and Frankish pirates. The Celtic bards call him, "The mighty Caros, king of ships."

Wales is particularly rich in monumental stones, and they are of the utmost historical value, especially as ancient manuscripts are scarce; and, though more care is now taken of them, they have suffered irreparably from being used as troughs, gate-posts, etc.

Close to the Machno Falls is charming Pandy Mill, which, with its dripping wheel reflected in the pool below, and shadows flickering on lichened rocks from waving ferns and drooping mountain-ash, has been the subject of numberless sketches.

The Fairy Glen is a romantic ravine near the confluence of the Lledr and the Conway; where wooded banks, a lovely stream, clear as crystal, and ferny rocks contrast charmingly in light and movement with the restful calm of Llyn-yr-Afanc, or the Beaver's Pool. In the dark ages—a convenient expression—the natives of these parts thought one of the biggest beavers in this lake was a water dragon, and wild tales were told of its fierce and bloodthirsty deeds. The magician Merlin was sent for, and he, laying a spell on the dragon, it was caught by the giant Hu Gadarn, and dragged across to Snowdon, twelve miles off, by a team of white oxen, and then thrown into the depths of Glaslyn.

The valley of the Lledr is surpassingly lovely, and the haunt of artists of every degree. At the head of the glen there is one of the most primitive villages in Wales, snugly sheltered under a shoulder of Moel Siabod.

A railway now traverses this valley, and ere long Dolwyddelan must lose its air of quaint old-world repose. A mile to the west are the ruins of Dolwyddelan Castle, a spot extremely interesting to students of Welsh history, for it was the birthplace of Llewelyn ap Iorwerth the Great—a skilful warrior who for years checked the proud Plantagenets, harassing and destroying their armies, and proving a greater obstacle to their schemes of conquest than his brave and ill-fated grandson, Llewelyn ap Gruffydd.

Two massive square towers, on a rock in a wild region, attest to its primal strength. No longer men stand at bay against their foes, or sally forth to fight them in the green valleys around. Instead of the clash of arms, the song of birds on the wild-flowered brink of the dashing Lledr fills the morning air with sweetness. Dolwyddelan was the last castle in North Wales to yield to Edward I., who destroyed it in 1283.

In this neighbourhood, on or near the Roman road, Sarn Helen, is the curious hill-fort of Pencaer-Helen. The meaning of Helen in this con-

juncture has never been satisfactorily explained. It is often given to the earliest roads both in North and South Wales, and also to fortified places. In old French stories there is a mysterious princess, named Ahel, who is said to have made the first roads of her country. Are Ahel and Helen the same persons?

The sides of Pen-caer-Helen are strewn with sharply-pointed stones placed upright in regular order, and not very much above the ground. Now, amongst the ancient Gauls and Celts the invariable method of attack was by a rush and sudden surprise, and stones placed in this manner would form the best defence from the enemy's horsemen that could be devised.

Bettws-y-Coed (station between hill and vale) is reached after passing Llyn Elsi and Capel Garmon, where there is a cromlech. At Bettws the Llugwy joins the Conway, and near at hand are the Rhaidr-y-Wennol, or Swallow Falls. They are, perhaps, the finest in Wales—the upper one a broad perpendicular sheet of rushing water. Tradition says that the spirit of Sir John Wynne of Gwydir haunts these falls, and that it is to be seen under the cascade, where it lies in order to be washed from its sins. However great, they are surely expiated by this time!

The road crosses and re-crosses the wayward

Llugwy. Moel Siabod towers in the south-west, and Y Wyddfa and his guards are in front, as we journey to Capel Curig, passing on the way a pretty cascade, and pausing on the bridge of Pont-y-Cywg to watch the cloud shadows on the Carnedds, Llewelyn and Davydd.

The charming village and lakes of Capel Curig have been too frequently described for me to attempt it.

The Capel Curig ascent of Snowdon, frequently called the Penygŵryd route, was taken on a wintry December day by Professor Tyndall and a friend, and is graphically described in the Professor's book, "Hours of Exercise on the Alps."

The Llugwy rises in the dark lake of Ogwen, which reflects the broken rocks of Carnedd Davydd, and the Nant-y-Gŵryd (brook of the Gŵryd) finds its outlet in the twin lakes of Capel Curig. The Pass of Penygŵryd leads you Snowdonwards to Glaslyn, deep and grey, and Llyn Llydw, stern and sombre, and to the chasm of Cwm-y-Llan.

Passing along the banks of our main river, we reach Llanrwst. This small town is chiefly on the right bank, and consequently in the county of Denbigh. A beautiful vale, with woods, and distant moors and mountains, surround it. The church, dedicated to St. Michael, has a finely carved rood-loft, and contains, also, the Gwydir chapel and its

ancient tombs. It is said to have been the burial place of Llewelyn ap Iorwerth.

Portions of the old mansion of Gwydir are worked into the modern house, within which there are many interesting relics. The name signifies, The Bloody Land, in allusion to a battle fought here between Llywarch Hen and the Saxons about 610. The first baronet of Gwydir, Sir John Wynne, wrote a history of his family, which is valuable and amusing, giving us a curious insight into the manners and customs of the beginning of the seventeenth century. He was remarkably shrewd, haughty, and austere, and laid down the most minute rules for the conduct of his household.

The church of Llanrhychwyn, sometimes called Llewelyn's old church, is very primitive, and is set in the midst of aged yew trees. The font dates from the eighth century, and two of the windows are worthy of note. It is dedicated to St. Rhychwyn, a British missionary.

The three pretty lakes of Llyn Gwrynydd, Llyn Crafnant, and Llyn Cwlyd lie west of the village. The last named is difficult of access, but amply repays the effort of reaching it. The moors are covered with ling and gorse, and the lovely lake reflects the shadow of the everlasting hills.

At Trefriw there is a valuable mineral spring, and near it are the fine waterfalls of Dolgarrog and

Porthlwyd; and in the vicinity are the sites of a Roman station and of a Cistercian abbey. The learned Dr. Williams, who compiled a Latin-Welsh dictionary, was a native of Trefriew.

Y Foel-Fras, 3091 feet, and Tal-y-Fan, 2000 feet, are the highest mountains northward, and from them and the lakes around flow many streams to swell the Conway.

The Pass of Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen (gorge of the two stones) separates these mountains. In connection with its name a legendary story is related.

As a giant and his wife were toiling up the Pass, on their way to Anglesey, they met a man of whom they inquired the distance. The stranger pointed to his worn-out wooden shoes, and said they were new when he quitted the island, and that he had walked straight ever since. The giantess, discouraged by this news and wearied with the burden of stones in her apron (intended for stepping-stones to cross the sea on), opened it in disgust, and out they rolled. Antiquarians go and inspect them, and call them *carneddau*, but they not all know how they came there.

The Conway passes Llansantffraid-Glan-Conwy (St. Bride's on the Conway), and reaches the ancient town to which it gives its name, with a castle of which Pennant says, "That with one exception a more beautiful one never rose." Built by Edward I. in

1284, it was besieged and reduced to great extremities by Prince Madog ap Llewelyn before it was completed; but this stormy beginning was not an omen of its later history, for though a place of great strength, it has not been one of "war's alarms." On its surrender to General Mytton, the Parliamentarian leader in 1646, he caused all the Irish of the garrison to be tied back to back and thrown into the river. The walls are from twelve to fifteen feet thick, and are flanked by eight embattled towers, each of which had originally a turret rising from the centre. The wide moat was crossed by a drawbridge, and the portcullised gateway was very strong. The hall is 130 feet long, 32 feet wide, and 30 feet high, and it had nine windows.

The castles of Caernarvon and Conway were built about the same time, and by the same architect, and were powerful aids in the subjugation of Wales. Although virtually conquered, the national spirit remained defiant, proud and contemptuous, and Edward, a foe whose will was iron, was bent on crushing out of it all vigour and life.

The old Welsh were by nature warlike, but their knowledge of the art of war was very limited. As a nation they had had few opportunities of acquiring learning of any kind, for, scanty in numbers, their greatest security lay in their mountain fastnesses; moreover, their bards kept green the memory of

their original immigration. Distrustful of the stranger, from whom they seldom learnt aught but treachery, they clung to the isolation that their life engendered, and it was in vain that they now flung themselves against the wily Edward when forced into the open field. He held the gates of Snowdonia.

Work was cheaply done in those days, and we learn from documents still extant, that the great hall of Conway Castle cost about £40 or £50 of the money of the period.

Queen Eleanor, from her beautiful oriel windows, doubtless often watched the arrival of the captives of her stern lord's sword and spear. Did she pity them, we wonder?

Richard II., on his return from Ireland in 1399, sought refuge in Conway Castle, from whence he was dragged a prisoner to Flint, and on to Pontefract to meet a miserable death.

The town of Conway is picturesque by nature, and man's handiwork, softened by time, has made it interesting. The houses cluster on the steep slopes above the river, and the walls are said to be in the form of a Welsh harp. They are in good preservation, and the three entrance gates are each guarded by two towers. The venerable church is well worth a visit, and it was in the churchyard that Wordsworth met the little maid, whose simple

childlike answers inspired him to write the often-quoted poem: "We are seven."

Plas Mawr (great house), now used as the quarters of the Royal Cambrian Academy of Arts, is an ancient mansion, the front decorated with curious heraldry, and the date 1585.

There are two bridges here over the Conway—Stephenson's tubular bridge, and Telford's chain bridge. In early times this river was celebrated for its pearl fishery. The historian Pliny tells us that Julius Cæsar dedicated a breastplate studded with British pearls to Venus Genetrix, in her temple at Rome, and Suetonius states that the chief motive of the Romans in invading Britain was to obtain possession of the famous pearl fisheries of the country. Pearls are no longer found in the Conway, though the species of mussel that produced them is not uncommon.

A shipping trade in slates and timber is carried on in a quiet slumberous way, as befits the grey old town, and tourists roam about its ancient streets.

"The noble steeds and harness bright,
And gallant lord and stalwart knight,
In rich array—
Where shall we seek them now? Alas!
Like the bright dewdrops on the grass,
They passed away."

CHAPTER II.

"Where mingled with the clouds, old Cambria draws
Its stealing line of mountains lost in haze."

The railway crosses the Conway by Stephenson's bridge, and we shortly arrive at Llandudno, in the peninsula of Creuddy. This well-known seaside resort is on the western side of Orme's Bay, and has fine sands and a magnificent sea, sheltered by the headlands of the Great and Little Orme, over and about which there are many charming walks. At the end of the Great Orme there is a lighthouse and telegraph station. Puffin's Island and Anglesey lie north, and below are beetling cliffs and a swelling sea. The pretty little mountain church of St. Tudno, recently restored, and with some twelfth century work, is very interesting. Near it there is a cromlech, and a rocking stone, called St. Tudno's Cradle.

Round the Head westward, we come again to the mouth of the Conway, and the old Welsh fort of Deganwy (castle on the water), or Gannock, as it was called by the Normans. This was an important

post and royal residence, built up and destroyed many times, and the scene of conflict between Britons, Saxons, Danes, and Normans.

The cliffs are grand, and the distant mountains in the south are beautiful, as we approach Penmaenmawr (head of great stone), another favourite resort of summer visitors, in a neighbourhood full of interest.

Braich-y-dinas (city flank), on the summit of Penmaenmawr, is the site of a British fort, which, tradition says, was the strongest in Snowdonia. Here the Welsh chiefs, broken and dispirited, awaited the negotiations between Llewelyn and Edward I.

In the pretty Sychnant (dry brook) Glen, there is a Maen-hir (long stone)—frequently called part of a Druidical circle; but we are now told that Meini-hirion are really sepulchral stones. Near this place a terrible battle was fought between the Britons and Romans.

A short distance to the west of Penmaenmawr is Llanfairfechan (Church of St. Mary the Less), and opposite, across the Lavan Sands, is Beaumaris.

The Aber Falls, in a lovely glen in the bosom of the mountains, are near the pretty town of Aber. The sunlight glints on the overhanging trees, through which you have charming peeps of the sea on your homeward walk.

In a mountain pass about three miles from Aber, there is a curious relic of the old fighting days. It is a great flat stone six feet long, and is called the "stone of the arrows." According to tradition, the chieftains of the north, when war was declared, used to assemble at this spot, and sharpen their arrows and battle-axes on it. It is covered with dented marks that give it all the appearance of having been used for that purpose.

The celebrated princes, Llewelyn ap Iorwerth, and his grandson, Llewelyn ap Gruffydd, lived much in this part of the country.

Y Drosyb, 2478 feet high, blocks the way southward, but round his shoulders we get lovely views of the blue Snowdonian hills.

From Aber the train—passing Moel Wnion—brings us to Bangor (high choir), a place of great antiquity and interest, historically and ecclesiastically, being the oldest episcopal see in Wales.

The city lies between two hills, one rocky and broken, the other sloping, and it is along the latter that the houses are principally built.

The cathedral has been terribly mutilated—nay, destroyed several times. Saxons, Danes, Welsh, have wreaked their rage on it, and there is very little ancient work left. The first church on this spot was built about A.D. 550, and was dedicated to St. Deiniol. This was destroyed by the Norsemen in

1091. The second, which rose on its ruins, was burnt in 1211. Another was also burnt down in 1402 by Owain Glyndwr. The carved ceiling in the present church and the reredos are very fine. Everything is carefully looked after, and the air of repose and peace is very pleasant after the turmoil of the world outside.

Bangor is a busy place. The river Ogwen and the little river Cigid form the harbour called Port Penrhyn, where slates from the neighbouring slate quarries of Penrhyn are shipped. This forms the chief trade of this lively little city.

Owain Gwynedd, a great prince of North Wales in the twelfth century, during a reign of thirty-two years, by the force of a brave and resolute character kept together the chieftains of the north under a common banner, and thereby successfully withstood the forces of Henry II. This great prince was buried in Bangor Cathedral, and we learn from one of the Hengwrt MSS., that when Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, came to that city, to preach a crusade against the Saracens, and saw Owain's tomb, he charged the bishop to remove the body out of the church when he could find a fit opportunity to do so, as he had died under excommunication from Archbishop Becket, for marrying his first cousin, the daughter of Grono ap Edwyn, and had refused to put her away. The bishop, very

much puzzled how to carry out the order of his superior, hit upon the expedient of making a passage from the vault through the south wall of the church underground, and so secretly shoved the body into the churchyard.

This Owain fought a tremendous battle in Anglesey, with an invading army of Erse, Manx, and Northmen, in which he was completely victorious.

"Owain's praise demands my song,
Owain swift and Owain strong,
Fairest flower of Roderic's stem,
Gwynedd's shield and Britain's gem.
* * * * *
Big with hosts of mighty name,
Squadrons three against him came,
Black and huge along they sweep
Burthens of the angry deep. . . .
Dauntless on his native sands
The dragon son of Mona stands;
In glittering arms and glory drest,
High he rears his ruby crest.
There the thundering strife begins,
There the press, and there the din. . . .
Where he points his purple spear,
Hasty, hasty rout is there,
Marking with indignant eye
Fear to stop and shame to fly;
There confusion, terror's child,
Conflict fierce and ruin wild,
Agony that pants for breath,
Despair and honourable death."

Ancient writers are loud in their praise of the

magnanimity and just dealing, as well as the prowess, of this great warrior, which makes the action of the Bishop of Bangor sound very mean and spiteful.

Penrhyn Castle, the seat of Lord Penrhyn, is a handsome modern building. Amongst the numerous curiosities within its walls is a Hirlas horn, or drinking-cup. It is the horn of an ox chased in silver, and suspended by a very heavy silver chain. On great occasions—of religious solemnity, or warlike enterprise, or domestic rejoicing—this great horn was sent round to the guests full of metheglin, or strong cwrw ale; and each had to drink off the draught, and blow into the cup in proof that it was empty!

Five and a half miles by rail from Bangor is the busy town of Bethesda, and near it are the celebrated Penrhyn slate quarries. There are two kinds of slates found here, red and blue, and they have the high-sounding names of duchesses, countesses, and ladies, according to their quality.

The Ogwen, the chief river of the district, is in parts very beautiful. It takes its rise in Llyn Ogwen, a lovely sheet of water, under the shade of lofty mountains.

Of these Tryfan on the south-east is a grand and rugged rock. Above it rise the Glyders; and on the north a shoulder of Carnedd Dafydd slopes

down to the water's edge. Y Garn, 3107 feet, towers high over the dark lake of Idwal.

This lake is very interesting to geologists, for the rocks are covered with glacier scorings, and on its western edge are several little green hills which they tell us were moraines in the remote ages when ice and snow covered the land. These valleys are now green and fertile, teeming with life and its interests, and it is difficult to realize so strange and desolate a scene.

A glacier is a mass of snow and water, arrested as it descends from the mountains and frozen into ice. It melts a good deal in the summer, but a fresh layer is formed on it each succeeding winter, so it never entirely disappears, except when, as has been the case in Wales, the temperature of the air has completely changed, and that is the work of countless ages. Moraines are masses of rock and stone and shingle which have been riven by lightning, or washed down by rain, from the mountains, and thus form long ridges of débris on the borders of the glaciers. When a glacier diminishes or disappears, it leaves its moraines stranded on the sides of the valleys, and these in course of time are covered with verdure.

Scorings are to be seen on rocks, and even on roadside walls, in every part of Wales; but it requires a practised eye to detect them. They are

marks, like scratches, grooved into parallel lines, and denote the "grinding action of the glaciers" as they slowly worked their way down the sides of the mountains.

Geologists say that the bed of Llyn Idwal was ground out by a glacier in the ice age.

The sad story of Prince Idwal, a son of the Owain Gwynedd who was buried in Bangor Cathedral, is part of this lake's history. He was slain by his foster-father, Nefydd Hardd, while they were out hunting together, and his body was thrown into the lake, which from that day was called by his name.

The family and posterity of the cruel murderer were degraded by law, and became bondsmen; but his grandson, according to the custom of the times, made atonement by giving lands to the church (at Llanrwst), and thereby was reinstated among the noble families of Wales.

Dr. Morgan, bishop of St. Asaph, who assisted in the translation of the Bible into Welsh in Queen Elizabeth's time, was descended from Nefydd Hardd.

At the end of Llyn Idwal furthest from Llyn Ogwen is Twll Du, or the Devil's Kitchen, a curious and fearful looking cleft in the rocks, and a wilder and more gloomy spot can scarcely be conceived. The cliffs rise sheer out of the lake, and are split into a thousand fantastic shapes; and

through this chasm the stream rushes with an impetuous roar.

Legend says that the lake is the abode of demons, and constantly haunted by the spirit of Prince Idwal's murderer, and that the fish in it have only one eye, and that no bird ever dips its wing in the water, or remains an instant near it. Another story tells us that a hunter was once looking out for game, and saw perched upon a rock a most extraordinary creature, hunched like a buffalo, and covered with tufts of gold coloured hair; he started in pursuit of the animal, following it to its lair in Twll Du. The hunter let fly his arrow with so true an aim that the beast rolled over mortally wounded, and bellowed so loudly that the rocks split open in every direction. But alas! for the bold hunter, neither he nor his prey were ever seen again.

In the sheltered nooks of the Twll many rare plants may be found, and from the rocks above there is a most impressive view of mountains, streams, and lonely lakes.

The Falls of Benglog (stone head) are at the southern end of the Vale of Nant Francon, or Vale of Beavers. This vale, and the numerous glens that open into it, were in far-off ages the bed of a glacier.

The road from Bangor to Caernarvon is delightfully varied. On the left, mountains line the

distance, while the nearer view is of flat grey meadows, divided by low storm-tossed trees, interspersed with pretty little dingles. On the right lie the Menai Straits. An August sun gave life to the crisp waves, and a fair wind sped the numerous vessels on their way, when I first viewed the scene. Trains rushed across through Stephenson's wonderful bridge, speed and comfort combined. Before this bridge was erected, a ferry boat conveyed passengers over, and in stormy weather it was to say the least uncomfortable, while accidents were not uncommon.

The chain bridge for carriages and pedestrians is elegant and graceful, and so lofty that a ship of three hundred tons burthen, with all sails set, can pass beneath, leaving several feet between the top-mast and the roadway of the bridge. It was designed and built by Telford, and was opened in 1826; and is twenty-four years older than the tubular bridge, over which the first train passed in March 1850.

Caernarvon, the county town (pop. 9870), is chiefly interesting from the picturesque ruins of its castle.

The heads of the Welsh princes, Llewelyn ap Gruffydd and his brother Dafydd, were rotting on spikes on the Tower of London when the first stone of Caernarvon Castle was laid, A.D. 1283. The walls were thick and high, with thirteen embattled

towers, surmounted by turrets, hexagonal, octagonal and pentagonal in form, and the whole space originally enclosed covered three acres. It occupied an imposing position on the summit of rocky ground projecting into the Straits: on one side the sea, on another the river Seint, and on each of the other two a deep and wide fosse. It was one of the most impregnable, as well as one of the most beautiful castles of the Middle Ages.

We will enter by the King's Gate. Over it there is a statue of Edward I. in the act of drawing his sword. Time has almost defaced the carving, but the meaning was clear enough when the Conqueror placed it there. Within this magnificent gateway there are the grooves of four portcullises, and it would be impossible to force them all by fair fighting. Inside the walls there were lofty galleries, with numberless slits from whence to let fly arrows. On the right of the main entrance is the beautiful Eagle Tower, guarding the mouth of the river Seint. This tower has three turrets, and takes its name from the now broken figure of an eagle, which was one of Edward's crests. Along the battlements are a number of heads carved in the stone.

On the left is the Queen's Gate, leading to state apartments with spacious windows, where enough of the stone tracery remains to show how lovely they must have been.

This stupendous relic of Edward's will has had a changeful history. The story which has been related for centuries that Edward II., the first English Prince of Wales, was born in the Eagle Tower, is now, after careful investigation, declared to be impossible, though the tourist is still shown a small low passage-room as being the place. It is not likely that Queen Eleanor would choose this shapeless apartment; more conclusive, however, than conjecture, is the fact gathered from documents still extant, that the Eagle Tower was actually not roofed until 1316, when Edward, who was born on St. Mark's Day, 1284, was thirty-two years of age. The building of the castle was begun in 1283, and such an enormous structure could not have been habitable the following year. That he was born in the town of Caernarvon seems the real solution of the matter, nor is there any doubt of the manner of his presentation to the Welsh princes. Why so much importance should be attached to his birthplace is strange, when we consider that few have so disgraced a high position as the feeble and selfish Edward of Caernarvon.

"I leave thee and thy precincts grey,
Amid a hundred winters still the same;
Thy steel-clad barons are at rest,
Thy turrets sound to warder's tread no more.
Beneath their brow the dove hath hung her nest,

High on thy towers the curling ivy shines;
No stormy trumpet wakes thy deep repose,
Past are the days that on thy serried lines
Around thy walls saw the portcullis close."

The old town of Caernarvon, striking, as you approach, is disappointing on a nearer view; there is very little of interest in either streets or houses. A few old buildings, differing in no wise from others in any old Welsh town, do not divide attention with the castle. The chief exports are slates, from the Llanberis quarries, and copper ore. The chief imports, timber and foreign goods. There are many small local industries, and there is an air of business about the place. The assizes are held here; it is the head-quarters of the Militia, and there is also a Diocesan training college. The best view of the town and neighbourhood is from the top of Twt Hill, a rocky mound on the Bangor Road. The ivied walls of the castle rise high above the roofs of buildings, surrounded by the walls of the town all but entire.

To the south of Twt Hill is Llanbeblig Church, the mother church of Caernarvon, for, old as that town is, Llanbeblig is older. Near it is the site of the Roman camp of Segontium, of which the remains are few; originally it covered seven acres. A Roman villa and baths have been traced, and coins have been found. Near it is an old well called Helen's

Well, after Helena, the wife of Maximus, a cousin of Constantine the Great. Also a stone bearing an inscription, denoting that Constantine was born at Segontium. The identity of this Constantine is a puzzle to antiquarians. The great emperor of that name was undoubtedly born at York, but it might have been his father or his son. Nennius, an historian of the ninth century, says it was his son.

Matthew Paris, on the other hand, states that in A.D. 1283 the body of the emperor's father was found at Segontium, and that by order of Edward I. it was reinterred with great pomp in Llanbeblig Church. In fairness it should be stated that Constantine was a common name in Britain after the Romans left the island, and the stone may commemorate some private person.

The old church has some good windows, and must have been a fine building. It is dedicated to St. Peblig, a native missionary, and is an instance of one of the many churches in Wales bearing the name of a saint not admitted into the Roman Calendar. Formerly it was whitewashed, even to the roof, a practice once universally applied to any building, and still frequently met with. Pennant tells us it was done to keep away goblins, but a much more practical reason was given to me by a Pembrokeshire farmer. The slates formerly used for roofing were small and ill-fitting, and therefore they

were washed with a mixture of lime and sand, which was very tenacious. This kept them together so well, that they could withstand the wind and rain of years.

The Roman road, Sarn Helen, passes through Llanbeblig, and by a branch of it, we reach the old fortified port of Dinas Ddinlle, near the sea, a British stronghold before the Romans appropriated it.

The ten miles' journey by rail from Caernarvon to Llanberis is all too short, for the blue peaks of Yr Eifl, and then of Y Wyddfa and his guards, mark the distances, and the nearer landscape is one of ever-changing beauty. As the train glides into the station we are beside Llyn Padarn (Padarn's lake), the second largest in Wales. It is two miles long, and only separated by a narrow strip of land, through which a small stream flows, from the smaller lake, Llyn Peris. Both are lovely—deep and tranquil, and were formerly full of trout and char; but the refuse from the slate quarries and constant fishing, have greatly reduced their attractions for the angler. The slopes of Moel Eilio, and the two Glyders, descend almost to the brink of Llyn Peris, from the lower end of which the round tower of Dolbadarn (Padarn's meadow) on its rocky eminence commands the passage of the vale. Within this ancient stronghold of the native princes, Owain Goch was imprisoned for twenty years for rebelling against his brother, Llewelyn ap Gruffydd. An awdd (ode),

composed by a bard with the long name of Howel Voel ap Gryffri ap Powel Gwyddel, laments his captivity in plaintive words:

> "From yonder height a captive's sighs
> Are wafted towards me by the gale;
> There chain'd, abandon'd, Owain lies,
> And I still live to tell the tale—
> To tell how by a brother's doom
> Yon towers are Owain's living tomb."

Five more verses of a similar character follow.

Owain, who was joint sovereign of Wales with Llewelyn, had endeavoured to possess the whole Principality, and probably, had he succeeded, would have punished his brother as he himself was treated, but this severity is nevertheless a stain on "the front and shield of wild Wales."

Davydd, the youngest of the three brothers, rebelled on his own account, and shared for a time Owain's captivity, but he managed to escape. Utterly faithless, this prince allied himself alternately with Llewelyn and Edward I., accepting from the last named both lands and titles. Eventually he embraced the Welsh cause, and when his brother fell at Builth (history is silent as to the fate of Owain), he became hereditary Prince of Wales. From Dolbadarn Tower, to which he had retreated with his family and a large body of retainers, he was soon obliged to fly to a cavern in the dark morasses

of Llanberis, from whence he was hunted out, and by his own countrymen. Carried in chains to Rhuddlan, and from thence to Shrewsbury, he was there put to death by the merciless Edward.

Caradoc of Llancarvan represents Davydd as a prince greatly disliked on account of his cruelty and intractable spirit; killing and putting out the eyes of those who would not submit to him, "after the manner of the English."

The shocking cruelty of these border wars mars the characters of men far removed from the half-savage Davydd, and the charge brought by the old chronicler is repeated by Holinshed, who tells us that Henry II. in his wars in Wales punished the nobility "very rigorously, causing the eyes of the young striplings to be pecked out of their heads, and their noses to be cut off or slit, and the ears of the young gentlewomen to be stuffed." "But," continues he, "I find that in this journey, King Henry did not greatly prevail against his enemies, but rather lost many of his men of war, both horse and foot, for by his severe proceedings against them he rather made them more eager to seek revenge than quieted them in any tumult."

The church of St. Peris is charmingly situated at the southern end of the smaller lake. A description of it written ninety years ago, tells us that it was completely smothered in ivy, so that it was

impossible to see its size or shape, and that the gravestones around were quite hidden by grass and tall weeds. It presents a different aspect now, and is worthy of inspection, part of it dating from the twelfth century. The curious roof has been likened to a ship with the keel uppermost. Of the patron saint there is no authentic account. Some writers say he was a native missionary; others explain the name very differently, and tell us that the church was built on a spot sacred to the Peri, or fairies, who were believed by our ancestors to guard fountains and solitary places, and, by a transition easily understood, the simple converts to Christianity retained the name. The well of St. Peris is hard by the church, and was credited with healing properties even in Pennant's day, who tells us it was under the care of a sibyl, or wise woman, a bodily representation of the Peri of old.

The writer who describes the church tells us of a visit to the curate. The good man's stipend was £40 a year and a small farm. His wife was rarely absent from the spinning-wheel, which stood in the kitchen of their little cottage. His bedroom was his study, where he kept his desk and a few books; his dress was a threadbare blue coat, exhibiting many marks of the industry of his wife, antique corduroy breeches, and a black waistcoat, and round his head was tied a blue handkerchief.

He and his family tilled the farm, toiling hard that one of the sons might be enabled to enter the father's profession. The parish loved and respected the homely man, for his time and sympathies were ever at the call of the sick and needy; and it was with kind entreaties that the stranger was constrained to share his evening meal.

At the beginning of the present century rents were very low in North Wales. A farm of 300 acres, with an inn upon the land, in the Llanberis district, was let at 3*s.* 6*d.* an acre; and another of 2000 acres at £60 per annum, and a third of 600 acres of mountain pasture at £5 per annum, or about 2*d.* an acre.

In Llanberis there once lived Margaret Uch-Ivan, who was so strong and active that at the age of seventy she could throw any man in a wrestling bout. She made her own shoes, and she shod her horses, and, more wonderful still, she employed her leisure by playing on the harp and violin.

The falls of Ceunant-Mawr (great chasm), though only sixty feet high, are very striking from the manner in which the hurrying stream is caught by the uprise of a craggy rock, and forced to leap the edge, from thence plunging into the gloomy pool below.

In this glen there is an ancient stone to which is attached the weird legend that whoever goes to

sleep on it, will awake either a poet or a madman. Much as one might covet the high estate of the first, the risk is too great.

The Pass of Llanberis—otherwise Cwm Glas (the blue vale)—is scarcely to be exceeded in Wales for wild and rugged grandeur. The cliffs are in places two thousand feet high, and fragments of dark rock torn from them in winter storms strew the narrow vale.

Many little valleys stretch away in the openings of the hills—perhaps the most striking are Nantlle and Drws-y-coed. Pedestrians alone can penetrate their deep recesses.

The story goes that the valuable copper mine of Drws-y-coed (the door of the wood) was discovered by a pedlar who was crossing the mountain, and being fatigued by the heat of the sun and his heavy pack, rested in a sheltered nook and fell asleep, shortly to be awakened by a tremendous noise close to his ear. Curiosity overcoming his fears he examined the spot from whence he imagined the sound proceeded, and found a large aperture in the side of the mountain, and, beside it, a mass of glittering stuff smelling strongly of sulphur. He took to his heels, more frightened than ever—for was not sulphur of all things the token that the Evil One was near?—and he never halted until he reached his own village, where he told his adventure with much eagerness.

Amongst his audience were some miners, who hastened to the spot and verified the discovery not of anything uncanny, but of a mine, which has yielded enormous wealth.

This will be a good place to speak of a curious superstition of the mining districts of Wales. There is said to be a clan of fairies, very friendly to miners, called "knockers," who live underground, and by their noises point out to explorers where the ore lies. Not very long ago they were fully believed in, and even now any strange sounds are hailed with satisfaction by those who work in the bowels of the earth. The "knockers" are busy people, and many stories are told of their friendly agency. Mr. Lewis Morris, a man of learning and good sense, who lived more than a hundred years ago, declared his belief in them, and mentions two of his mines in Cardiganshire which were disclosed by their agency. "They stand my very good friends," he says, "whether they are aërial beings called spirits, or whether they are a people made of matter not to be felt by our gross bodies, as air or fire, or the like. We have now very good ore where the 'knockers' were heard at work. Let who will laugh—*we* have the greatest reason to rejoice, and thank the knockers, or rather God, who sends us these notices."

The little people are said to go on knocking day

and night, until they have drawn the miners to the spot, and there is no doubt whatever that the belief in them has led to the discovery of rich lodes and famous mines. Diligently using their little hammers, "boring, blasting, and beating down the loose," they work away, but they object to any listening. If the mortal miners stop in their work to listen, so do the knockers, and only resume it when their fellow-labourers are busy. From this, sceptics say that the knocking is a mere echo heard in the caves; but that scarcely agrees with the rest of the story, that the knockers never do the same kind of work as the others, for if the miners are blasting, the knockers are either boring or pumping, and so on.

The miners are never afraid of these elves, looking upon them as friends. Listeners at the openings of mines have sometimes heard talking; but always in such whispers that, with the reverberations along the sides, the words could never be distinguished. They are said to be clean tidy folk, much given to washing their clothes.

Cwm Glas is a deep ravine running into the very heart of Snowdon, and terminating in the precipices of Crib-y-Ddysgl. Professor Ramsay considers this glen one of the most interesting in Wales. Under its tall cliffs, like jewels in a dark setting, are two tarns, which are 2200 feet above the level of the sea.

Nearly at the top of the pass is Gorphwysfa (the resting-place), and from it you overlook a considerable part of the valley. If it is a summer's evening, the reflected rays of the departing sun gild the wild and treeless glen with the beauty of colour, and soften its gloomy grandeur with the calm of Nature's reposing hour. But it will not do to linger, for night amidst these treacherous morasses and yawning rocks would test the nerves of the hardiest.

CHAPTER III.

"Nor fen nor sedge
Pollutes the pure lake's crystal edge;
Abrupt and sheer the mountains sink
At once upon the level brink,
And just a trace of silver sand
Marks where the water meets the land;
For in the mirror bright and blue
Each hill's clear outline you may view,
Shaggy with heath, but lonely bear
Nor tree, nor bush, nor brake is there."

A LAKE district lies Snowdonwards between Llanberis and Beddgelert. Close under the awe-inspiring precipices of "Snowdon's shaggy side" lies Glas Lyn (blue lake). From it the Afonlas takes its rise, passing on through the larger lake of Llydaw. This lake—though environed by mountains, is less sombre than Glas Lyn—less under an eternal shade. It is one mile and a half long, and is much resorted to for fishing; but the trout are said to be shy. Therefore, if a small basket is made, the angler has an excuse.

From Llyn Llydaw the Afonlas winds round the base of Y Lliwed, and then dashes on to form

the sparkling cataracts of Rhaiadr-Cwm-Dyli, which have a fall of more than 300 feet. Then it turns into Nant Gwynnant (fair vale) and expands into Llyn Gwynnant. This pearl of Welsh lakes is about one mile long, and was formerly full of fish. It is bordered by a copse of noble trees, and by a steep and heathery slope—part of the lower ridge of Y Lliwed. Rocks, broken ground, and woods combine to form a scene of luxuriant wildness, to which houses, sheltering in cosy nooks, add another interest.

The Afonlas still leads the way, and, six miles on, enters Llyn Dinas, the third lake it traverses since its rise in Glaslyn. This lake is oval in shape, and almost shut in by mountains—Yr Aran towering over its western banks, a wealth of gorse and heather.

In the narrow vale below—a favourite haunt of the Tylwyth Teg, or fairies of luck—stands the isolated rock of Dinas Emrys, from which the lake receives its name.

It was crowned, in the ages of romance and fable, by a British fortress, where lived Vortigern, the feeble prince who, for the love of Rowena, the fair Saxon damsel, forsook his country, and linked himself with its enemies, only to find betrayal. The story is, that at a grand banquet given by Hengist on Salisbury Plain, 360 of Vortigern's followers—the flower of the Kymric nobility—were ruthlessly

massacred, and he himself thrown into a dungeon, from which he was only permitted to escape after granting all the demands of the insolent Saxons—one being the surrender of his friend Lloegria, and of Eddol, count of Gloucester, a valiant chieftain who, according to the Triads, slew, with a stave he happened to pick up, no less than 600 men between sunset and dark.

It was formerly the custom, in some parts of Wales, to kindle fires on a day in November in memory of this "Treacherous Meeting," or "Plot of the Long Knives," as the massacre was variously called.

Vortigern fled to the seclusion of Nant Gwynnant, and by the advice of the wise men of his kingdom, whom he had called together, commenced the building of a castle on the Emrys Hill. But the goblin builders who haunted the vale objected, and every morning the workmen found their work scattered and undone. In despair, Vortigern sent for Merlin, who being a wizard, was naturally supposed to understand the tactics of the goblins better than the "wise men."

Merlin obeyed the summons, and, taking the king to the top of a mountain, bade him look within a cave, and lo! there was disclosed to him the terrible sight of a white and a red dragon fighting madly with each other. "You will never build your castle,"

said the magician, "while these are at war. They are very powerful, and the goblin builders are their subjects. I am stronger, and my knowledge can control them; I will befriend you, and quench the fiery dragons' wrath." And he kept his word, though by what means we are not told, and Vortigern's castle was now completed without hindrance. In time, Vortigern, frightened by the conjuring tricks of his friend, the professor of the Black Art, made it over to him, and retired to the Vale of Gwrtheyrn, where he built himself another castle; and there, secluded alike from his enemies and the rage of his subjects, he ended his days.

The fate of the "wise men" was very sad. They were enclosed in a cave; to this day a huge stone, called the Stone of the Magicians' Tomb, marks the spot where they are said to have been immured. Moreover, there is a black cavern, nearly on the top of Snowdon, in which Merlin lies concealed, and in a trance, from which he will be awakened when the need of Britain is sorest. Then he will rise and slay the dragons of Sedition and Rebellion. Around him are scattered heaps of gold and jewels. Some of the "knockers," as they are so friendly, would confer a great favour by leading the miners who now search the heart of Snowdon to the spot! Tradition likewise affirms that it was in Nant Gwynnant Merlin built the magic grotto for the

lovely Vivienne who had enthralled him, and whose treachery turned it into a dungeon from which he could not escape. The voice of the mighty wizard is said sometimes to be heard even now among the hollow rocks, lamenting his weakness in tones of angry sorrow. Another tradition places this grotto in Merlin's native county of Caermarthen. The story is told in many countries beside Wales.

"Till great Snowdon's rocks grow old,
And cease the storm to brave,
This consecrated spot shall hold
The name of Gelert's grave."

The sweet little village of Beddgelert is immortalized by the touching story of Llewelyn and his faithful hound; but it is so widely known that my relation of it shall be brief.

Llewelyn ap Iorwerth—the Great—who died A.D. 1240, was residing one summer at his hunting-seat here, accompanied by his wife and family. The wolves were plentiful, and he chased them with hound and horn over glen and mountain. On starting one day, his favourite hound Gelert—a gift from King John—refused to join him, and, disregarding his frequent calls, slunk away. The day wore on. In a chamber of the castle the infant son of the prince lay sleeping in his cradle, when through the open door there stole a gaunt grey wolf,

who, seeing no one on guard, rushed towards the child. But Gelert lay beneath the cradle, and from his hiding-place flew at the cowardly brute, and after a fearful struggle killed him. In the fight the cradle was overturned, and the child was stained with the blood of the dead wolf and the wounded dog. At this juncture Llewelyn returned, and Gelert, showing every demonstration of delight, sprang to meet him. Being still angry, the prince drove him off, and as he did so, observed that his jaws were red with blood, which was also sprinkled over the walls and floor.

A strange foreboding seized him; and, in a paroxysm of rage, he drew his sword and plunged it into the body of the hound. The dying yell of the faithful creature roused the frightened child, who cried aloud, and the father turned to see his little son struggling to free himself from a confused heap of bloodstained clothes. There it lay, uninjured—its tiny hands resting on the wolf's dead body.

Remorse filled Llewelyn's heart, and he erected a monument over the remains of the devoted Gelert, and the place was ever after called Beddgelert (the grave of Gelert). The monument is in a meadow near the church—two plain upright stones, one much shorter than the other, a tree and a few bushes, and broken railings.

An old Welsh proverb says, "He repents as much

as the man who killed his dog," and this would point to the veracity of the story; but many countries—England, Ireland, France, and Persia—claim a similar one, and now learned men tell us that it is an Aryan myth—in other words, that its origin is as old as the hills.

Beddgelert, encircled by Moel Hebog (the hill of the hawk), Craig-y-Llan, and Yr Aran, nestles in a romantic dell where three green valleys meet, and two rivers join. The Collwyn, tearing down from Llyn Cwellyn, which, as soon as it passes the grey old bridge—the favourite lounge of the natives—loses itself in the Glaslyn. The latter, in about a mile, enters the ravine of Aberglaslyn, the gate of Merionethshire. The church, a simple structure, with an old and curious black stone font, was once part of a priory of Augustine Canons, called the House of the Valley of the Blessed Virgin of Snowdon. In the Middle Ages it was the rest house for pilgrims on the way from Ireland to St. David's.

It is said to have been totally destroyed by fire. The custom of hanging up on the walls the coffin-lid plates of former parishioners is observed here, and also in a few other churches of North Wales.

Following the impetuous river through the meadows, where the mowers were at work in the August sunshine, we entered the defile of the Glaslyn. It is a vast rent in the mountains, with precipitous

sides which rise in jagged cliffs, fringed with fir trees, to the height of 700 feet. At the bottom, the river toils and struggles through a narrow channel, strewn with enormous boulders. The scene is very impressive, as, having left the meadow path, we follow the winding road. The varied colouring of the cliffs is very striking. In one place they are black, with graceful larch trees springing from the crannies that have been riven asunder by storms; in another, grey, patched with the violets and crimsons of ling and heather; and again, ochre, garnished with soft mosses and lichens and waving fern. At the end of the glen, high above the stream, is the one-arched ivy-clad bridge. Through it the Glaslyn rushes, its clear green waters freeing themselves from a tortuous bed, and

> "The dark and shaggy pass spreads out
> To a green valley,"

through which the silent expanding river meanders adown the Vale of Tremadoc to the sea.

Cynicht, the Matterhorn of Wales, the majestic Moel Wyn, and the glowing circle of mountains, gradually fade in the evening light, as we drive (in the carriage we had entered at the bridge) into the thriving town of Port Madoc, passing Tremadoc, with its pretty church.

Port Madoc, with its busy slate wharfs, owes its existence to the energy of Mr. Maddocks, a true

benefactor of mankind, who by his skill and the enormous outlay of £100,000, made the magnificent embankment which extends for a mile across the Traeth-Mawr, at the extremity of Cardigan Bay, joining the counties of Cardigan and Merioneth.

By means of this embankment, 7000 acres have been rescued from the sea—over which boats were navigated eighty years ago. Previous to this undertaking Mr. Maddocks had reclaimed 2000 acres on the upper reaches of the Traeth, and on the western side of the Glaslyn.

From Moel-y-Gest, a lofty hill overlooking Tremadoc Bay, there is a splendid view, and from the embankment the mountains of Snowdonia fill the distance in grand and sweeping lines. We watched the entrancing sight as the changing shadows from crimson-veiled clouds floated over them, scarcely daring to believe that they were the same mountains whose lofty ridges we had scaled with laughter and scant breath a few days previously, they looked so ethereal and so far.

The geology of the neighbourhood of Penmorfa—a village a little to the north—is very interesting.

Dolbenmaen on the Dwy-fawr lies directly north of Criccieth. It is notable for a *tomen*, the burial-place of warriors.

Criccieth, a pretty village town on Tremadoc Bay, is much frequented by tourists; its sands are

fine, and the bathing is good and safe. The ruins of the castle are finely placed on a lofty rock overlooking the sea, and confronting its frowning likeness, Harlech Castle, on the opposite side of the bay. Two circular towers, a double fosse, lines of courts and halls, show the might of Edward I. The site of the castle was as usual a British fort.

A Welsh knight Sir Howel-y-Fwyall, or Sir Howel of the battle-axe, was made governor of Criccieth Castle by the Black Prince, for his bravery at the battle of Poictiers. With his axe he cut down the enemy, took the French king prisoner, cut off the head of his horse, and performed many other deeds of prowess. In addition to his governorship he was knighted, and allowed to bear the arms of France, with "a battle-axe in bend sinister." Further, it was ordained that this famous blade should be hung up in the Tower of London, and that every day "a messe of meat" should be served before it at the expense of the Crown. The "messe" was afterwards taken out and distributed amongst the beggars at the gate.

After Sir Howel's death, the custom still continued, with the addition that the beggars were enjoined to pray for the soul of the gallant knight. Eight yeomen, called yeomen of the Crown, received eightpence a day to perform this duty, which was uninterruptedly carried on until the time of Queen Elizabeth.

Sir Howel's descendants still live, it is said, in Lleyn.

At Cefn-isaf (lower ridge), near the pretty village of Llanystumdwy, there is a cromlech, and also another on the Pwllheli Road; a third at Ystumdwy was recently destroyed.

Many curious relics of British art have been found in this neighbourhood—stone querns, bronze belts, etc., and at Glasfryn a Glain-neidr (adder's gleam) was unearthed. This is a ring of glass, the like of which was worn by judges round their necks, and it was believed that if they failed to administer true justice, the ring would tighten and choke them.

Following the coast westward, we pass the mouth of the sweet little Afon-dwy-fawr, and soon reach the mouth of the Afon-wen (the old water).

From Criccieth, a few miles by a coast railway, and the tourist arrives at Pwllheli (salt-water pit). This town is quaint and old. Our visit was on a fair day, and the narrow steep streets were crowded with men, women and cattle, seemingly as much intent on merriment as on business. On our drive to Nefyn, a few hours later, we overtook groups of cows and horses, without any one to look after them, and our coachman told us they had been sent home from the fair, and that "they would find their way safe enough!"

Carreg-y-Wimball, or the Gimlet rock, is a

picturesque headland protecting Pwllheli from the south-west winds. The bathing is good, and the shipping trade is considerable.

Llanbedrog is a lovely village at the foot of a hill sloping seaward. Passing Llanbedrog Point we gain St. Tudwal's Bay, and are near the two little St. Tudwal's Isles, which for miles have given a mysterious charm to the seascape.

Authorities differ respecting St. Tudwal. On the one hand he is said to have been a bishop, on the other the husband of one of the twenty-five daughters of Brychan, the great chief of Brecknock.

The scenery increases in grandeur as we pass Abersoch, a busy fishing village, under its sheltering headland. When Wylfa (observatory) Head is rounded we enter the bay of Ceiriad, where the beach is shut in by lofty cliffs which rise from a series of rocky platforms. The bold storm-beaten Head of Penkilan is by a few miles the southernmost point of this county, and the sight of the sea rolling in on the rocks and breaking into clouds of spray is very grand.

Porth Nigel, or Hell's Gate, is the name of the large bay west of Penkilan. This dreadful name is given to it by sailors, because of its dangerous and conflicting currents. An old pilot well acquainted with this coast says, that "from whatever point of the compass the wind blew out at sea, on account of

the surrounding high rocks it always came into the mouth of this bay, and from whatever quarter the tide flowed, the upper current always set inwards."

There is much to interest antiquarians in the peninsula of Llwyn, for, especially along the coast, remains of camps and fortified places abound.

The parish church of Llanengan, with its beautiful rood-screen, is worthy of a visit.

The dreary bogs of Rhos Hirwaun (marsh of the long moor) form the inland view, but the coast continues very beautiful, with small sandy bays and bold headlands, until Aberdaron is reached.

This place has been called the most picturesque and at the same time the least visited in Wales. In the middle ages the last indictment would not have held good, for it was often thronged with pilgrims waiting for the stormy sea to permit of the passage to Bardsey, or the Isle of Saints.

Gorse and heather clothe the curiously marked cliffs, which are in places 600 ft. above the surf-washed strand. At the Point of Braich-y-Pwll, is Ffynnon-Fair (Our Lady's well), and also the remains of her chapel. It is not long since the waves washed the walls of the ancient church at Aberdaron dedicated to St. Hyrwyn, but it has been rescued and restored. It is very interesting, and had the privileges of sanctuary. Here came for refuge

Gruffydd, son of Rhys Tudor, prince of South Wales. His story (to be told subsequently) and that of his beautiful sister Nesta, is very characteristic of the treachery of the lawless times in which they lived.

That of Nesta is narrated in the account of Pembroke Castle, of which her husband was governor.

Insula Sanctorum, The Iona of Wales, rises out of the lonely sea a league away, a fierce deep current isolating it from the mainland sometimes for weeks. Its Welsh name is Ynys Enlli (the island of eddies), and its more familiar one of Bardsey originated from its being the resort of bards, as well as saints—bards' *eige*, or island.

This primitive old-world of saints and missionaries is well worth braving the stormy "race" to see. Twenty thousand saints—for *all* the ancient inhabitants were holy—are said to have been buried here; but the beautiful church in which they worshipped, and the religious houses where they dwelt, have almost entirely disappeared. The fragment of a tower alone remains. The monastery was founded A.D. 516 by Cadfan, a prince of Armorica, who came over with a large following, driven, it is supposed, from his kingdom by the Franks. He was joined by Einion Frenhin, a native missionary, and the fame of their saintly lives was great throughout Christendom

When Dubritius, archbishop of Caerleon, resigned his see to St. David, he retired to Bardsey, and when the monks of Bangor Iscoed were massacred, nine hundred persecuted Christians fled to this holy isle and readily received the shelter they craved.

There is an old legend, written in monkish Latin, which tells of a compact made between the Almighty and Laudanes, the first abbot of Bardsey.

In return for the piety of his monks, the privilege was granted to them of dying according to seniority, the oldest to go first, like "a shock of corn ripe for the sickle." "Each knew therefore the time of his departure, and were always prepared for Death's summons." When the monks grew rich and proud, and no longer led a religious life, God withdrew His "miraculous covenant," and they died like other men, sometimes the younger, sometimes the middle-aged first.

Pilgrimages were made to Bardsey more especially for obtaining the intercession of the dead, and as the voyage was dangerous, extraordinary stories were told of its difficulties and perils.

The island is only about three miles in circumference, and with so large a population must have been much crowded. Bones are dug up in vast quantities; large ones being actually in use for fences when Mr. Cliffe visited it in 1850.

The coast continues broken, and near Penllech Bay is the interesting cromlech of Mynydd-Cefn-Amlwch, a huge mushroom-shaped stone, supported on four upright pillars. Near it is Carn-Madryn (1221 ft.), one of a picturesque group of hills set in a country barren and cold looking.

Porth Dinllaen stands on a narrow promontory, and well in the shelter of the bay is the ancient town of Nefyn, or Nevin, famous for the grand tournament held here in A.D. 1284 by Edward I. In imitation of King Arthur the plain was called "The Round Table." The site of the lists and courts can still be traced by the local dames.

Opposite the neat old inn is the well, called Ffynnon-Fair, still refreshing the traveller with the purest water.

The fearful precipices of Carreg-y-Llam (the rock of the leap) rise sheer from the sandy beach flanking Nant Gwrtheyrn (Vortigern's brook)—a glen sloping down from the central peak of Yr Eifl, to the brink of the sea.

Countless sea-fowl hovered round, otherwise the seclusion of the spot was perfect, as, rounding the headland in a boat, we landed there in the fading light of an August evening. The wind blew cold, and Nature in her wildest forms met our gaze as we shudderingly followed the path along the top of a gloomy and precipitous ravine, shut in by the sea

on one side, and by mountain walls on the other. Nothing could exceed the solitary, shadowy gloom of the scene, as we stood by Bedd Gwrtheyrn (the grave of Vortigern), about which ghostly stories are rife, and in which a huge skeleton was found many years ago.

A very sorrowful story, something like 'The Mistletoe Bough,' clings to this narrow glen, and illustrates the ancient custom in Wales of a bride hiding herself on her wedding morn.

A fair girl, in the days of old, was very happy as she walked beside her lover on the eve of their wedding day, and with a shy smile she looked at him as she thought of the secret hiding-place she had fixed on, and how puzzled he and the "fetchers" would be as they sought her, while the marriage bells were ringing.

When the morning came she slipped away and clambered into the hollow trunk of an old oak-tree. Alas! she had entered her grave; for the rotten stuff gave way, and she sank lower and lower. She caught at the crumbling sides, and called in agonised tones, but none could hear, and her heart died within her. Who can tell the terror and agony of the hours as day faded into night and succour came not? Poor child, she had disappeared as utterly as if the earth had swallowed her up. The wretched bridegroom became melancholy mad,

and spent hours wandering in the woods; his favourite spot being beside the spreading branches of an oak-tree, where he murmured that he sometimes heard the voice of his lost love. And so years passed, until one day a terrible storm broke over Nant Gwrtheyrn, the tree was riven by lightning, and passers-by were horrified to find the lover lying dead beside the body of his lost bride, restored to him in death.

The three peaks of Yr Eifl, frequently called The Rivals, probably from the likeness in the pronunciation of the two words, are very striking, and are seen from many points of the country. Tre-'r Ceiri (town of forts), one of the best preserved examples of an ancient British hill-fort, is on the lowest summit. Parts of the walls are fifteen feet high, and sixteen feet broad, and some of the circular stone huts are almost entire. It is curious that history is completely silent on this important post, a proof doubtless of its great antiquity. The immense strength and solidity of the walls is shown by the way they have withstood the storms of centuries.

The vicinity of Yr Eifl is shunned by sailors, as it is popularly believed that the compass is disturbed by the magnetic ironstone found in its rocks. The slope near Carreg-y-Llam is called Llith-faen, the enticing or attracting stone. The danger is probably

due, not to the ironstone, but to a strong undercurrent of the sea which trends shorewards with considerable force for miles.

The pass of Llanelhaiarn is very fine, but we will hasten to St. Beuno's Well, once famous for its miraculous cures, and the Bachwen cromlech and the extremely interesting cruciform church of Clynnog.

This church is very large, and is a splendid example of the Perpendicular style of architecture. Tower, porch, and doorway are very beautiful, and a richly carved rood-loft separates the chancel from the nave. It is dedicated to St. Beuno, who towards the end of the sixth century established here a Bancor (high choir) and college. He was much revered in the middle ages, and eleven churches in Wales are dedicated to him, and at his death three monasteries claimed his body for burial. Like St. Teilo at Llandaff, he obligingly appeared in three coffins exactly alike, to the satisfaction of them all.

The chest of St. Beuno is still preserved. It is a rude box formed out of a solid tree, and had three locks, and was used to receive the votive offerings of the faithful. One, brought by all worshippers, was bread and cheese on Trinity Sunday. At that festival, which was also the saint's birthday, all the calves born that year in the parish with a net

uncommon mark on their ears were brought to the monastery, and either given up or redeemed by a sum of money, which was put into the chest. This custom continued until recent times.

An old proverb of the country-side says: "You may as well try to break St. Beuno's chest," so his treasures were apparently well guarded. It was in addition, the receptacle for "cursing money," and this church was noted for that strange and unholy ceremony, which was thus performed.

If any one considered himself injured by a neighbour he kneeled "bare knee'd" at St. Beuno's altar; and, offering a piece of money, prayed with horrible imprecations that he, his wife, and all that was his, should be cursed for generations. Sometimes the priests would not permit this "offering an enemy," as this custom was called, for there were good and holy men in the darkest days of superstition. In that case those who could not be dissuaded, went to St. Beuno's Well, and dropping their offering into the water, uttered over it their wicked prayers.

St. Beuno himself was a good hand at scolding, for we are told that Cadvan, prince of North Wales, had made him a gift of land, but he had died before it was ratified. However, his son Cadvallon carried out his father's intention, and St. Beuno gave him in return a golden sceptre of the value of forty cows.

Unluckily it turned out that the land was not Cadvallon's to give, and also that it belonged to a chief whom it would be dangerous to rob, so the saint asked for other land instead. This the prince resolutely refused, and the holy man in his wrath cursed him without stint of words, and then quitted his presence. On his way home he met Gwrddeint, the prince's cousin, who softened his temper by giving him the town of Clynnog, "to belong to God and him for ever for his soul's sake, and that of his wicked cousin." After all St. Beuno got more than the value of the golden sceptre.

It was customary for the sick and lame to strew the saint's grave with rushes, and then lie on them until morning, when it was expected they would be cured. Their complaint was not rheumatism, we will hope.

Clynnog is prettily set in trees. Near it is Craig-y-dinas, the site of a Roman station, and also of Foel, a British hill-fort. At Pont-y-Cimon there is a funny old bridge over the Llyfni, with this quaint inscription on the keystone: "Catering Bukle hath give £20 pynds to mak this brige."

The grand and precipitous ridges of Mynydd-Mawr lie south of Nantlle, and the lakes of Llyniau and Nant-y-Llef are very pretty.

On the brawling Llyfni, which rises in the

Cilgwyn Hills, is the park and mansion of the Wynnes of Glynlifon.

There is a curious story told of an ancestor of this family named Cilman-Troed-Ddu (Cilman of the black foot). Chief of one of the fifteen tribes of North Wales, he had for his most intimate friend a wizard, who, although his knowledge was vast, was not satisfied, and wanted to get possession of a book written by no human hand, and carefully guarded by a demon who lived in a cave on the top of one of the peaks of Yr Eifl. The more he thought of it, the more he longed for this treasure, for he hoped thereby to gain knowledge of certain things that would give him greater power over the spirits and goblins of the neighbourhood. The knight offered to scale the mountain, and try and steal the book, and the wizard joyfully accepted the offer. Off he started, fully armed, and with several relics hung about his neck to ward away danger, the wizard's parting directions being, that he must be especially careful in crossing a certain brook not to wet his feet.

After many hours of weary riding, Cilman found himself in the gloomy glen of Gwrtheyrn, which is surrounded by jagged mountains, and opens only to the sea, but he valiantly urged on his steed over the rocky path, climbed the steep cliffs, and reached the ancient fortress of Tre-'r Ceiri, where inside the

huge ramparts were numerous cells, and in each there dwelt a demon. On a pinnacle of rock in the centre, the chief demon resided, and with him a hideous, huge, and terrible giantess, whose business it was to carry out his plans, and as they were always wicked, she was even more feared than her companion. These two spent their leisure in reading *the* book, which taught them evil, although to Christian eyes it would show much that would benefit mankind.

The giantess was busy gathering stones into her lap (to this day part of the hill-fort is called Moel-carn-y-Gwrch—the hill of the heap of stones), which she intended to make red-hot at the demon's fire, and to hurl down on the fields below, with the malicious object of destroying the crops of the patient husbandman.

When Cilman appeared riding full tilt up the steep hill-side astonishment caused her to start from her seat, and the stones fell out of her apron. She flew at the knight, screaming to the demon to come to her aid, and a terrible combat ensued. Though exhausted with his toilsome march, Cilman laid about him with his cross-handled sword, and they could not injure him wherever its flashing blade turned, although they spat venomous fire at him, and the demon tried to trip him up by hooking his tail round his legs.

By chance the knight struck the demon's wing with his sword, and immediately the book dropped out of it. He snatched it up, and, turning away, spurred his steed to descend the mountain, the demon, the giantess, and the whole of their followers rushing after him, howling frightfully, but he kept them off by waving his redoubtable sword. When he reached the Llyfni, the brook he had been warned about by the wizard, his jaded horse sank dying, and the demons set up a cry of victory. To touch the water would be fatal, to leap across it seemed impossible, and the situation was desperate. But the knight was a man of resources. Rising on the back of his fallen steed, he took a flying leap, and nearly gained the opposite shore, but only nearly, for one leg sank in the water, and he felt as if a hot iron was holding it down. He tugged harder and harder, for the other leg was in danger, and he could not draw his sword, for he was holding on to the bank with both hands like grim death. To think of the cross-handle was however sufficient, and in a moment his leg was free, but he heard angry growls as he climbed the bank. Hurrying homewards, he found the wizard anxiously awaiting him; but he had not returned unscathed, and who could expect it after such an adventure? The leg which the demon had caught turned quite black, and the knight was lame in that leg to his dying day. In memory of this

strange encounter, he henceforth wore black armour, and his friends called him Troed Ddu.

Belan Fort crowns the narrow strait across which lies the southern point of Anglesey. And again we are at Caernarvon, and our travels for the present ended.

The Estuary of the Mawddach with Cader Idris.

MERIONETHSHIRE.

CHAPTER I.

"Full fair the gleisiad* in the flood
Which sparkles 'neath the summer sun,
And fair the thrush in green abode
Spreading his wings in sportive fun;
But fairer look, if truth be told,
The maids of county Meirion."

So sang the Lewis Morris of a century ago, and still this county holds its ancient renown, for its matrons are comely, and its maidens are charming. In their eyes dwells the purity and brightness of the rushing rivers, and in their forms the shy grace of the lonely hills.

This wild and mountainous county of Wales is the only one that has retained its old designation. It is derived from Meirion, the grandson of Prince Cunedda, a noble British chieftain of the fifth century; and the added syllable "eth" is a common termination signifying a tract or strip of country belonging to the person or name indicated in the

* Salmon trout.

preceding word. In the reign of Henry VIII., when Wales was divided into the present twelve counties, a portion of Meirioneth became Merionethshire, the letter *i* of the first syllable slipping out of the spelling.

What Meirion did that his name should be perpetuated we know not; but his grandfather Cunedda lives in the songs of bards as a brave warrior, who rescued his country from a horde of marauding Irish, who had crossed the narrow seas, and inflicted great cruelties on the inhabitants. His kingdom extended along the sea-coast between the rivers Dyfi and Maw, and inland as far as Cadr Idris.

The Romans called this district Mervinia, and traces of their domination are abundantly evident on the craggy steeps and lonely passes of the land.

Merionethshire is a maritime county, and the coast-line, stretching from the estuary of the Dovey (Dyfi) on the south, and separating it from Cardiganshire, to the Traeth-Mawr (great sands), which forms its boundary on the north, embraces no less than one hundred miles, so numerous are the inlets made by the stormy Irish Sea, which, with ceaseless ebb and flow, guards its rocky shores. On the south, Merionethshire is bounded by the Dovey estuary and a part of Montgomeryshire; east by the rest of Montgomeryshire and part of Denbighshire and Caernarvonshire, and west by Cardigan Bay.

From north to south it measures thirty-eight

miles, from east to west forty-five miles; in square miles about one hundred, and in circumference, one hundred and fifty-four.

It is in the dioceses of Bangor and St. Asaph, in the province of Canterbury, and contains thirty-six parishes.

The county-town is Dolgelly, and here the Assizes are held, but the meetings of the County Council alternate between it and Bala. It returns one member to Parliament, and at the last census, the population was 47,369.

Merionethshire is a land of mountains, lakes, and rivers, and its four estuaries are a marked feature. They are the Traeth-Mawr, the Traeth-Bach, the estuary of the Mawddach, and the estuary of the Dovey.

The estuary of the Mawddach is nearly in the centre of the coast-line, and on its northern shore is Barmouth, a pretty, irregularly-built town, with fine, dry, though soft sands. The Welsh name is Abermaw (mouth of the Maw), or Mawddach; from this, it merged into Bermaw, and finally into Barmouth. It has no antiquities; the ancient tower which gave shelter to Henry Tudor when he was plotting the overthrow of Richard III. has entirely disappeared. Its fame is however preserved in a Welsh poem, which compares it to the celebrated castle of Reinalt near Mold.

The coast railway crosses the estuary at Barmouth by a bridge, which, with a short distance at each end over the rocks, is a mile in length. There is a footway for pedestrians, and from it enchanting views, seaward and landward, are obtained.

Though the sands are sometimes abused, they are a paradise for children, smooth and dry, and five miles in length. Hotels and lodging-houses now abound, but formerly travellers were sometimes in a sorry plight unless they had letters of introduction to some of the neighbouring gentry. The Welsh are proverbially hospitable, and we are told of a family living near Dolgelly, who used to send daily to the inn, and presenting compliments, invite the travellers staying there to dinner. And very welcome they would be, with news and gossip from the outer world, in the days when letters and newspapers came but rarely. It was a common practice to have a cask of ale or claret—for that wine was formerly as much drunk as it is now—in the hall of a Welsh mansion, and all comers were welcome to a glass.

Barmouth is the only safe harbour on a coast which is beset with dangerous shoals and sandbanks. The port is formed by Ynys Brawd (Friar's Isle), on the north, and a gravelly beach on the south. There is some coasting trade, and a good deal of yachting in the summer.

Following the coast northward for a mile and a half, we reach Llanaber, the mother-church of the parish, a good specimen of a restored church of the Early English and Transition periods. The south doorway is very fine, and a striking effect is gained by standing in front of it, and looking across the nave, and through the open north door, to the sea and distant mountains.

There is an old and curious oak chest here, which still retains its ancient use as an alms-box.

Llanaber parish is nine miles long, and contains several interesting houses of the old Welsh gentry. It was the birthplace of four bards of one family named Phillips, who lived in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth, James I. and Charles I.

The winding road up the vale of the Mawddach, from Barmouth to Dolgelly, is perhaps the most beautiful in Wales. For ten miles, mountains and valleys, rocks, woods, meadows, and the ever-changing flow of the broad estuary, form a series of exquisite pictures.

Under the glow of sunset the deep *cwms* and sharply-escarped crags of Cadr-Idris are brought into strong relief, and the parting rays linger lovingly on the oak woods, and heather-clad rocks, and gild the sweet reflection in the winding river. But after all the early morning, when the tide is up and light clouds float across the vaulted blue, is

the most perfect time, for then a soft haze softens the long perspective with a tenderness beyond words.

Engineered with great skill between precipices and water margin, this road cost in some places as much as £2 2*s.* a yard.

At Pontddu (black bridge) a mountain stream rushes down, and through the opening below there is another charming view of Cadr. A hilly path beside the stream leads to a gold mine, once famous, and now, after a lapse of years, again in activity. The great wheel is close to a fine waterfall.

Following the main road from Pontddu, in two miles we reach the pretty village of Llanelltyd. Here the river Wnion joins the Mawddach, and it is these two streams, together with numberless tributary brooks, which form the estuary. Just above the long stone bridge the vale narrows, and turns abruptly north. As we ascend it, the Mawddach—here a wild mountain stream—is shadowed by the lordly Rhobell-fawr (2,409 feet), and by the jagged rocks of Craig-y-Call, forming a series of lovely views.

The descent of this glen is of equal, though more varying beauty. Cadr Idris, rocks, streams, and woods are there, and below lies Dolgelly, under the shadow of its patron, while the ruins of Cymmer

Abbey rest in calm decay, a bow-shot to the westward.

Here,

> "Pious beadsmen from the world retired,
> In blissful visions wing'd their souls to Heaven."

Numbers of the monks of old were good and earnest men, who will live for all time as the first teachers of God's laws—the first civilisers of our rude forefathers, leading them from rapine and bloodshed to love peace, to turn from hatred, to cultivate the land, to build houses and bridges, and to make roads; to respect themselves, and their neighbours, and to live in unity. Their task was noble, and their aims were high, when they came into these wild vales and shaggy hillsides. At first they lived in huts of boughs, or peat sods; then, as their power and influence strengthened, stately priories and abbeys arose, to show their skill and devotion.

Cymmer (the meeting of the waters) was founded about A.D. 1198 by some monks of the Cistercian Order from Cwm-Hir (long valley), in Radnorshire, under the protection of Meredyth and Gruffydd, the sons of Cynan ap Owain Gruffydd, prince of North Wales. In 1200, Llewelyn ap Iorwerth was a great benefactor to this abbey, and it flourished until the reign of Henry III. This king came into Wales to suppress a revolt, and on his way to

relieve Montgomery Castle, which had been captured by the rebels, took prisoner a monk of Cymmer. When questioned as to the strength and position of the enemy, the monk, a native of the country, boldly deceived the king, and induced him to make an immediate attack. In the fight that ensued, the Welsh, feigning a retreat, drew the Norman soldiers into a bog, where, encumbered by their armour, they could neither fight nor fly, and were slain. Henry, desperately enraged, ordered Cymmer to be set on fire and destroyed. By the payment of 300 marks, the abbot saved the church and a portion of the monastic buildings. The rest fell.

The ruins are considerable and interesting. The form of the church is unusual for a Cistercian building. They are generally cruciform, but this was one continuous nave, forty yards long, with a western tower. A low arcade opens into a chapel, the walls of which were continued to the east end of the church, which had three lancet windows. The cloisters and chapter-house have disappeared, but the abbot's lodging is perfect, and has a fine oak roof. It is in use as a dwelling-house.

From the top of a ridge near the abbey—Tomen-y-pentre (the high place of observation), there is a fine view of the estuary almost to its outlet in the sea.

With the exception of the very scanty remains of

Egryn Priory, on the margin of a mountain stream a few miles north of Barmouth, Cymmer is the only monastic ruin in Merionethshire. After the dissolution of monasteries, it fell into great neglect, and being in a remote, and then seldom-visited region, was almost unknown, and was confounded by so eminent a writer as Dugdale with Cwm-Hir, in Radnorshire. Locally it is called Y Vanner, and the Anglicised form of the word has been variously spelled Cymmer, Kimmer, and Kymmer.

That the mineral resources of the district were known to the monks, we find from ancient documents. They had the right of digging for metals and treasures, as well as authority over lakes, rivers, seas, and all birds and beasts, wild and tame, mountains and woods, and all things movable and immovable within their domains.

Llanelltyd Church, pleasantly situated on rising ground, is dedicated to St. Illtyd, a missionary of noble birth, who conferred many benefits, temporal and spiritual, on the Welsh people.

In the vicinity of Llanelltyd are the Vigra and Clogau gold mines, which upwards of twenty years ago created a gold fever in the district. Previously these mines had been worked for copper, but particles of gold being occasionally found, the proprietors determined to try for that metal. After a long and fruitless search, which they were on the

point of abandoning, gold was found in very large quantities. For two or three years a net profit of £20,000 a year was made, but the first successes were never repeated, and the mines were gradually closed.

But a change has again taken place, and operations are now being actively carried on with an energy and determination which must commend itself to all who are interested in gold-mining in the Principality.

A study of the ancient history of Wales, and of the Triads, give good grounds for believing that gold was once abundant.

The supposition that it was imported is very much lessened by the fact of the isolation of the land, the constant wars, and the almost impassable mountains which debarred traders. Moreover, the chieftains were too poor to buy it; and yet it is well-known that gold in various forms *did* constitute an important feature in their dress and armour. We will quote a few of the ancient poets.

Aneurin in his 'Gododin' says:

> "Three hundred battle knights
> Of Eiddyn in *gilded* armour,
> Three loricated hosts,
> Three leaders with *golden* chains."

Llywarch Hen describes the Prince of Rejed as carrying "a *golden* shield on his shoulders," and

one of his sons as "wearing *golden* spurs," adding further:

> "Four and twenty sons I have led,
> Wearing the *golden* chains, leaders of armies."

Cadwaladr and Rhiwallon-Rhun are represented in the Triads as being privileged to wear "*golden* bands round their necks, arms, and knees."

Cynddelw, who lived in the twelfth century, speaks of "a brave leader," "a hawk in *gold* enamel and in *gold* armour."

The words eurgalch (gold enamel); eurgaen (gold covering); eurllen (gold vestment); and eurdudded (gold garment), are frequently met with in ancient poetry.

Kilhwch, one of the heroes of the Mabinogion, is described as having "Precious *gold* of the value of 300 kine upon his archenad (shoes), and upon his stirrups, from his knee to the tip of his toe."

A ghost story is connected with the discovery of a curious gold corselet near Mold, in Flintshire, in 1833. An old woman returning from market in the dusk of evening saw an apparition, "of unusual size, and clothed in a coat of gold which shone like the sun." It crossed the road at the identical spot where the corselet was afterwards found—a spot commonly known by the name of Bryn-yr-Ellyllon (goblins' hill).

Of course she told the story to her neighbours,

and many marvelled, and it is a curious fact that amongst her listeners was the very person whose workmen shortly afterwards dug up the breastplate when they were pulling down a bank to level the ground.

The spot is about a quarter of a mile from Mold, on the Chester road. The corselet was composed of a thin solid plate of gold 3 feet 7 inches long, and 8 inches wide in the centre, and weighed about 17 ounces. It has a figured pattern, and embossed lines, and is a fine piece of workmanship.

"The echoes of thy halls are eloquent,
The stones have voices,
And the walls do live. It is the house of memory."

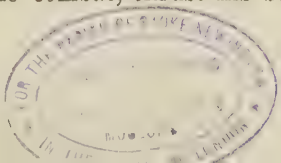
In the neighbourhood of Llanelltyd and Cymmer there are several fine old Welsh mansions. Nannau (the ravines) the seat of the Vaughans, is 700 feet above the level of the sea, and it is said to be the highest inhabited house in Wales. The long approach is through a dingle of forest trees, and the house is strikingly placed in front of a bare precipitous hill, and though there is little to note in its structure, it has been the scene of Welsh hospitality for ages, and many histories, gay and sad, surround the spot.

The legend of the Hollow Oak, or Demon Haunt (Derwen Ceubren yr Ellyll), is still told at the

cottage peat-fires, and children, though they listen eagerly, shun the spot even in broad daylight. But there is nothing to be seen except a brass plate; the decayed old trunk, once 27 feet round, was struck by lightning and destroyed in 1813. It was old when the deed was done which invested it with its evil name.

In the reign of Richard II., Nannau was the residence of Howel Sele, a cousin of the celebrated Owain Glyndwr. Owain had served that unfortunate king and received from him honours and rewards, and he refused to acknowledge his successor, Henry IV., alleging that being an usurper he was unworthy of service. His enemies say that this was simply a plea for furthering his own claims to the kingship of Wales, and on his endeavours to detach Howel from the reigning house, the latter indignantly refused, and a quarrel ensued, which was only quieted by the Abbot of Cymmer.

Some time after, Owain came into the neighbourhood, accompanied by his friend Madog, and, without asking leave, they hunted through his cousin's woods. Howel, greatly incensed, armed himself, and went forth, meeting Owain near a gigantic oak tree, and there accused him of rebellion. A fight ensued, and Howel fell deadly wounded, and Owain, aided by Madog, who had silently witnessed the combat, thrust his body into



the hollow trunk of the tree and then rode swiftly away.

The lady of Nannau wept long and sore. Time passed, and no tidings came to explain the strange mystery of her husband's sudden disappearance—her only comfort being her little son, to whom she devoted her life. The revolt of Owain Glyndwr had been crushed, and he, a fugitive, had died in obscurity, and yet the lady of Nannau paid her vows at St. Mary's shrine with hope undimmed, that she might yet see her lost husband.

On a dark stormy night in October, when the wind howled amongst the pine woods of Nannau, and castle gate and doors were barred, a stranger knight might have been seen urging his tired horse up the mountain-path that leads from the tumbling river-vale to the castle. He sounded his horn at the portal, and asked to see the lady on urgent business, that brooked no delay, and after some parleying he was conducted to her presence. At the threshold of the room he paused, and said: "Summon all your household, lady, and let there be witnesses of the words I utter. I am Madog, the ancient friend of Prince Owain Glyndwr who slew your husband." He then related the story of Howel Sele's death, and bade them search the hollow of the oak tree.

As soon as the grey dawn broke in the eastern

sky, the lady of Nannau and her servants hastened to the spot, and there they found the body of their master in his armour, dull and rusted, his sword still grasped in his fleshless hand—just as he had fallen forty years before.

"They bore the corpse to Vanner's shrine,
With holy rites and prayers addressed;
Nine white-robed monks the last dirge sang,
And gave the angry spirit rest."

Not a vestige of the magnificent tomb the lady erected remains, the oak is fallen, the story alone lives.

"Pale lights on Caldy's rocks were seen,
And midnight voices heard to groan,
'Twas even said the blasted oak
Convulsive heaved a hollow moan;
And to this day the peasant still
With cautious fear avoids the ground,
On each wild branch a spectre sees,
And trembles at each rising sound."

Hengwrt (old court,) another ancient house, was the birthplace of Robert Vaughan, a celebrated antiquarian of the seventeenth century. His valuable collection of Welsh MSS. is preserved at Peniarth. In the hall there is a real Welsh harp, but, alas! the strings are broken. This house and Nannau were known for their unbounded hospitality, and in return tenants and neighbours strove to show their respect for those who so nobly fulfilled the customs of the country.

Sometimes this regard led to embarrassment, for once on the occasion of a marriage at Hengwrt, the country people continued for three weeks to bring offerings to the bride and bridegroom. These consisted of poultry, pigs, calves, eggs, tea, sugar, and all kinds of eatables, so that the servants were worn out with receiving them, and puzzled where to stow away such an odd collection. Even dishes, pots, and pans were brought. Of course each donor expected an hospitable reception, and soon the numbers who filled the hall and kitchens, and the horses that crowded the stables, were so great, that orders were reluctantly given that no more offerings could be received.

This breach of an old custom gave great offence. Though clearly one of giving and getting, it is a proof of the mutual helpfulness engendered by the hard and frugal lives of the people, and of their clannishness, a marked feature in mountain races.

In early times the Welsh had Cymorthau, or gatherings, to help each other in any kind of work that was urgent—in spinning, in farm work, or in harvest, at weddings, and at funerals. It was often by means of the Cymorthau, that the farm was stocked for the young people, or the cottage for the labourer.

But to return to my story. On the morning of the wedding-day no less than 10,000 people were

assembled on or about the bridge at the entrance to the town of Dolgelly, and when the ceremony was over they proposed to take the horses out of the carriage and drag it to the residence of the bride—a considerable distance.

Very few of the dense and shouting crowd were sober, for they had drunk as much strong "cwrw" as they pleased for three days, so the bridegroom resolutely refused to allow it. Enraged at this they tore down the arches and decorations that had been set up along the route, and the first Sunday that the bridal pair appeared at church their carriage was pelted with mud, and it was many years before these insults to their national customs were forgiven.

The Ganllwyd valley up to Tyn-y-Groes (place of the cross) is very lovely, with Craig-y-Cae, exactly opposite Cadr Idris, and Moel Offrwm (hill of sacrifice), and the hoary Rhobell Fawr to the eastward. Close at hand is Moel Cynoch, known to all tourists in these parts for the Precipice Walk, which winds round it for three miles, and discloses views of valleys dotted with farms, sheltering woods, and running streams, with occasionally the low square tower of a church where for generations the inhabitants of these vales have prayed. In the distance there are openings in the rugged screen of hills, and Llyn Cynoch reposes in a hollow as we take the road to Llanfachreth, a quaint

old village, in the church of which there are two tablets to the memory of George III. A noted bard, Rhys Jones, was a native of this place.

Rhobell Fawr, a huge mass of greenstone, is not interesting, but from the summit there is a fine view of Snowdonia.

At Tyn-y-Groes we are near three celebrated waterfalls. The first, about a mile, is Rhaiadr Du (black cataract). It is near the confluence of the Camlan and the Mawddach, and is a double fall of about sixty feet, precipitating itself over black rocks covered in patches with a pure white lichen, and then breaking away, rushes down the glen in innumerable cascades.

A mile to the north of Rhaiadr Du is Rhaiadr-y-Mawddach (cataracts of the Mawddach). Here the water is three times broken in a descent of sixty feet. The rocks and trees form an amphitheatre round it, but the upper part is a good deal hidden by masses of foliage and intervening rocks.

Lovely wild flowers—harebells clinging to the grey rocks, heather, and the cheery little tormentilla —dower the rough path to the third fall, Pistyll-y-Caine (spout of the Caine), at the confluence of that stream with the Mawddach. Nothing could be wilder, for thick woods of oak and beech clothe the slopes down to the edge of the thundering river. This fall is decidedly the finest of the three, and has

a descent of 150 feet over a horizontal strata of irregular steps, forming a mural front of great singularity. At the bottom the water breaks in showers of spray on the nodding ferns and birches.

In this neighbourhood are two Maeni hirion (tall stones), monuments of a pre-historic age. One of them, Maen Llwyd (greystone), is in the valley of the Eden; the other, Llech Idris (flat stone of Arthur), is in the valley of the Caine, and is ten feet high. Doubtless they mark the graves of warriors.

Parts of the Roman road, Sarn Helen, can be traced here, and near it is another ancient monument —Bedd Porus (grave of Porus). It is much worn by the ravages of time, and the inscription has been a fruitful source of controversy.

Antiquarians suggest that Porus was one of the sons of Caw or Cadaw, and it is believed to be the oldest Christian gravestone in Wales.

The source of the Mawddach is in Craig-y-Ddinas, and we are nearing the chief watershed of Merionethshire, for here there is a general elevation of the mountain bases forming the nearest approach to a tableland. From it the Caine, the Eden, the Maw, and countless other streams take their rise, and flowing south-west form the estuary of the Mawddach, already described.

The lofty Arenig-fawr (2809 feet), only 105 feet lower than Cadr Idris, dominates the land in

the north-east, and from it flow the Lliw, and the Tryweryn to join the Dee, and also the Afon Prysor, which, going west, falls into the Dwyryd (twin river), and from it by Traeth-bach into Cardigan Bay. It is a land of waters, and bogs, and mists, and the road winds over the bleakest ground in Wales.

Llyn Arenig-fawr is immensely deep, and full of fish. The mountains of the district end in the chain of Arenig-fach, forming altogether a very fine group of hills.

The railway from Festiniog to Bala passes between Arenig-fach and Llyn Arenig, and has broken into the old solitudes and brought the simple inhabitants face to face with the outside world, but round Arenig-fawr life is nearly the same as it was a hundred years ago. The people are shy, their manners old-fashioned, and they speak the old tongue. The farmhouses and cottages are very primitive, with wide chimney-places, and immensely thick walls.

Small black cattle roam the hilly pastures, and sheep, nimble as goats, feed on the scanty grass of the steep rocks. Unless minerals are found, this district will doubtless remain as I have described it for generations.

Mountains and rivers tend to isolate a country, and legends linger long in the lonely farmhouses on the sloping hillsides, the blue smoke of whose peat

fires mingles with the mist. The stories are nearly always sad, and they are full of a noble instinct that revolts against the impossible, joined to a strong love of the weird as well as the lovely in Nature. They are often extravagant in play of fancy, but a tender note of feeling and a magical touch of beauty will gather up the threads of the wildest story, filling it with life and truth.

There is a passionate melancholy in the Celtic nature, and a sensibility of temper quick to perceive beauty, and an eager longing for life and its adventures, its emotions, its joys, and its sorrows, that finds an answering chord in tales of chivalry and the adventures of heroes.

A fervent and devotional spirit is knitted into the same life, soothing it with the heavenly promises of God's Word, and finding a solace in the wild melancholy hymns of a stern faith.

CHAPTER II.

THE WITCH OF THE WOODS.

"Now passed like the mist on the mountain
Are the days when such deeds could be done,
The clansmen are scattered for ever,
The race of the chieftains is run.
And gone are the green-coated fairies
That brightened the hillside of old,
The witches that rode in the tempest,
The Gruagach that haunted the fold."

This curious story, which has thrilled the hearts of many generations, has come down to us from the dim ages when the belief in fairies and spirits haunting fountains and woods—sometimes for good, sometimes for evil—was engrained in the minds of our ancestors.

Gwen was a maiden fair and the flower of the vale, and she is now busy over the final arrangements for her wedding, which is to take place on the morrow. No cloud dims the boundless sky of love; her mother follows her light movements with a yearning heart, and her father glances with pride on his only daughter. When night falls nothing remains

undone; the feast is spread, the numerous wedding-presents are arranged, and the wedding habit—for Gwen will ride to church, and run away too, after the ceremony, as her mother had done before her—is hung up beside the tall hat, and the cap that she will wear for the first time.

In the middle of the night fearful screams are heard coming from Gwen's chamber, and when her trembling parents reach it they find her dead. Paralysed with fear and sorrow, they shortly return to the kitchen and sit before the smouldering fire with terror-stricken hearts, and when day breaks hasten again to their darling's bedside. She is no longer there, body as well as spirit has fled.

Neighbours flock in, and a diligent search is made, but it is useless; and when the bridegroom arrives full of hope and light of heart, he is told the sorrowful tale. The shock is so startling and bewildering, that, beside himself with grief, he wanders into the woods. Attracted by a strange and moving light, he follows it, and finds himself at a castle he had never seen before. Fastening up his steed, for he was a Marchog, or knight, he entered the portals, still following the light, but as he proceeded it gradually decreased, and shortly he found himself in pitchy darkness, and he had to grope his way by feeling along the walls. He now perceived that the walls narrowed, and when there was scarcely room

to move, a door suddenly opened before him; stepping through it he found himself in a lofty and well-lighted room, where by a large fire sat a dreadful-looking old woman; on one side of her a heap of human bones, on the other a huge black cat, and encircling them a bloodstained line. Just within this line lay the body of his beloved Gwen. He darted forward to reach her, but the witch muttered a spell, and he was powerless to move. Chained to the spot, he was horrified to see the witch, assisted by the black cat and two others, white and red, who seemed to spring out of the fire, go towards Gwen and proceed to cut off her raven hair. The knight implored the witch to spare the beautiful curls he loved so well, and offered her money and jewels, but she was deaf to his entreaties, and turning again to the fire, brought out of it two red-hot pincers. Handing one over to the black cat, she informed the distracted lover that she was going to bring Gwen to life by pricking her with them.

Though longing to see his darling brought back to life, he could not bear that she should suffer such terrible pain, and offered all his possessions to the wicked old hag if she would desist, and let him pass the magic circle—but in vain. At last she said that there was one thing—one only thing that could prevail with her, which if acceded to, she would restore the girl to life without pain. The knight

eagerly asked what that was, and was overwhelmed with horror when she, with her awful eyes and claw-like hands uplifted, demanded his mother's soul to do what she would with. Torn with conflicting emotions, for he could not give up his dear mother from the rest and peace of her churchyard bed, and he could not stand by and see Gwen suffer so terribly before his eyes—he wished to die.

Meanwhile, the witch lowered the torturing instruments, and was just touching the white flesh when in the supreme moment of his pain the knight remembered the God who made him, and the Saviour who redeemed him, and the Holy Spirit who comforts us, and pulling out the crucifix that he carried within his doublet, held it aloft and solemnly repeated the Gloria Patri.

Immediately the witch and the cats rushed howling away, the fire went out hissing and spluttering, from the bloodstained circle rays of light shone, and the knight sprang to the maiden's side. The moment he clasped her in his arms the light of life came back to her sweet eyes, and the warm blood to her lips. Still pressing the crucifix to his breast, he led the maiden out of the enchanted castle, and mounting together his waiting steed, they ere long arrived at her father's door.

This old-world story has its lessons. It has taught eager listeners that truth and honour, and

the fear of God, will always prevail against evil; and that simple faith will turn aside the fiercest darts of the destroyer.

North of Arenig-fach, at the junction of Merionethshire with Denbighshire, is Carnedd Eiliast, (2197 feet). From it and the adjacent hills flow many streams, which find their way into Bala lake; but we will turn west by way of Trawsfynydd, and the vale of Festiniog, and down the river Dwyryd, to the estuary of the Traeth-bach and the sea.

The rail, the road, and the river Tryweryn, keep pretty near each other all the way from Bala until just before Llyn Tryweryn is reached, when the road goes north, over higher ground, in the direction of Festiniog. The railway winds through the Cwm of Prysor and by Caer Prysor—Prysg-oer (the castle of the cold brushwood). The remains are those of a Roman fort, on a bold rock on the margin of Sarn Helen. It was built without mortar, a very unusual circumstance in Roman buildings, but from the discovery of Roman coins and pottery, a doubt which had arisen respecting the real founders seems to be set at rest, especially as some scholars give the meaning of Prysor as haste or emergency.

Travellers of old speak of Sarn Helen as being well paved and in good repair. There is a fine field

for antiquarian research in the numerous tumuli which line this route.

The populous village of Trawsfynydd (cross mountain) lies between the river Prysor and the railway, and commands grand views of Snowdonia. Lakes abound in this neighbourhood, "walled in by lofty mountains." The church is dedicated to St. Madryn, a female missionary who lived in the sixth century, and who, assisted by her handmaid Anhun, converted the heathen around.

At Trawsfynydd the Prysor flows west to the Traeth-bach. By rail we go to Maentwrog, passing the Roman station of Heirir Mons; called also Tomen-y-mur (tumulus in the wall, from a mound inside the camp).

Near it is the ancient mansion of Rhiwgoch (red ascent), now used as a farmhouse, and, though sadly dilapidated, still possessing an old gate-house, a banqueting-hall, and some carved panelling.

Maentwrog (big stone of Twrog) is in the lovely vale of Festiniog, and near it are the beautiful waterfalls of Rhaidr Du and the Raven, both in wild and lonely glens. South-west of Maentwrog is the hill-village of Llandecwyn, midway between the lakes of Tecwyn-uchaf (the upper Tecwyn) and Tecwyn-issaf (the lower).

We have strayed from Maentwrog nearly to the Traeth shore, and will hasten back to the Falls of

the Cynfael. A rustic bridge crosses the stream half-way between the two falls. The upper one dashes headlong over three broken rocky shelves; the lower sweeps down in a wide smooth sheet of water, forty feet in depth.

In the middle of the river there is a tall column-like rock, called Hugh Lloyd's pulpit. Hugh was an astrologer who lived in the reign of James I. When seized with the "awen," or inspiration, he used to resort to the top of this rock and recite his poems. He had been a soldier in his youth, and when he returned to his native vale his nearest relations did not recognise him, though they kindly invited him to partake of their evening meal of milk and flummery; thanking them he sat down, and when the repast was over, addressed them in some extempore lines of which the following is a translation :—

> "For wines delicious is mighty France renowned,
> And various dainties are in London found,
> With butter Holland half the world supplies,
> But Cambria's flummery more than all I prize."

The lovely glen we are traversing is crowned by the village of Festiniog (place of hastening). The church is dedicated to St. Michael. There are large slate quarries in this extensive parish, employing more than 2000 men.

The production of slate is a very important

industry of Merionethshire, and upwards of 57,730 tons are quarried per annum.

The charms of Festiniog have been frequently extolled. High mountains close the distances, and through the richly cultivated valley the placid river Dwyrhyd winds, shaded by oaks and firs, and far away the sea glitters through the openings.

Beautiful outlines, colour, and variety are all here, and a Lord Lyttleton who visited it nearly a century ago says "that one might pass an age there and think it a day." An autumn sunset is the time for seeing Festiniog in its highest beauty. The broken escarpments of Moel Wyn and Cynicht glow in rosy light, and in the air a transparent haze mingles sublimity and softness, contrasting with the more positive shades of bracken and heather on the grey stern rocks at one's feet.

The Beddau-gwyr-Ardudwy (graves of the men of Ardudwy) is interesting to antiquarians, and a story somewhat similar to that of the Rape of the Sabines is connected with it. The men of mountainous Ardudwy stole a number of maidens from the vale below, and so won their love that when their friends came in pursuit and killed their lovers, they threw themselves into a lake which to this day bears the name of Llyn-y-Morwynion (the maidens' lake).

Only two of the thirty graves remain; they are said to have had pillars four feet high at each corner.

That they are the graves of slain warriors is pretty certain, and as they lie on and about the Sarn Helen, they are probably those of Roman soldiers.

The Manods, mawr and fechan (big and little) are conspicuous hills at the head of the vale, and between them is the large lake Llyn-y-Manod.

Slate is extensively quarried in this district—Diphwys (precipice) or Blaenau Festiniog. Blaenau (head of vale) is a modern and very curious town. Eight hundred feet above the level of the sea, and in a cleft of the gigantic hills, whose sides are seamed and marked by tramways and quarry-mouths, there are streets and large shops full of the productions of Manchester and Birmingham, and a large population intent on business; totally at variance with the ordinary Welsh town, where time seems of small account, and the last thing to be considered. The contrast of busy streets and railway stations, almost on a level with mountain-tops, is very striking. Near the Great Western Railway station is that of the famous Toy Railway. This is one of the modern wonders of Wales, and the engineering skill and money expended on it entitle it to rank high. The gauge is only one foot eleven inches, and the carriages—the seats of which are placed lengthways—are very small and low. The engines, called "double bogies," are

great curiosities—small, and yet powerful enough to drive seventy empty slate trucks, weighing each thirteen hundred-weight, carriages, passengers, and goods, up the steep incline. The length of this line is fourteen miles, and it cost £6000 per mile. The curves are so sharp that the head and tail of the train can be frequently seen at the same time. From the station at Portmadoc to the terminus at Blaenau, the elevation is 700 feet, and the whole line is cut into and embanked on the right-hand slope of the mountain; cuttings, embankments and bridges over the streams and rocky projections are frequent. The two tunnels are "scarcely larger in cross-sectional area than the trains themselves," and being very short do not detract from the enjoyment of the lovely scenery.

Below lies the fair vale of Tan-y-bwlch and the twin river Dwyryd, and across it, miles of wooded heights and verdant upland meadows, culminating in towering mountains which guard the beauties they enshrine; and westward stands Harlech Castle, which from its rocky throne seems to bid defiance to the glittering sea.

The Snowdonian range and beautiful Moel Wyn (fair hill) and Cynicht come into view at Llanfrothen, the grandeur of their swelling forms enchanting the eye until the train glides into Portmadoc station, just opposite Moel-y-Gest. This curious hill and

the Traeth embankment are described in my account of Caernarvonshire.

A spit of land ending in Penrhyndeudraeth Point (the two sands head) divides the two estuaries, of Traeth Mawr and Traeth Bach, which until engineering skill rescued the now fertile pastures from the sea were very much wider. In this little peninsula are the remains of the ancient home of the Anwyls.

"Take these flowers which purple waving
On the ruin'd ramparts grew,
Where the sons of Freedom braving,
Rome's imperial standards flew.
Warriors from the breach of danger
Pluck no longer laurels there,
They but yield the passing stranger
Wild-flower wreaths for Beauty's hair."

Harlech Castle (castle of the long flat stone), which has charmed us from many a distant view, was built by the Princess Bronwen (fair-bosomed) in the third century, and here she lived with her husband, an Irish prince. In a fit of rage he is said to have struck her a violent blow in the face, which she resented by putting herself at the head of his enemies, and a civil war ensued, which deluged the land with blood. In the Triads, the blow that Bronwen received is called, "One of the three evil blows of Britain." Shame and anger broke the spirit of the princess, and she is said to have died of grief.

In the sixth century, Maelgwyn Gwynedd, king of North Wales, added considerably to Bronwen's Tower. Of this chieftain a curious monkish legend is told. He had been very much offended with Tydecho, a Christian missionary of those parts, and in revenge seized a team of oxen which the holy man had with great trouble and perseverance taught to be steady in the plough. The next day, to his astonishment, he saw wild stags obediently doing the work of the oxen, and a grey wolf dragging the harrow after them. Enraged at the sight Maelgwyn brought out his milk-white hounds, and set them to chase the deer, meanwhile seating himself on a blue stone to watch the sport. The deer turned to bay, and quickly with their horns put the hounds to flight; the king in consternation rose, or rather tried to rise from his seat; but alas, his efforts were useless, he was fixed to it. There was nothing for it but to send for Tydecho, of whom he humbly asked forgiveness, offering the restoration of the stolen cattle, as well as giving him as much wood as he wanted to build a church. Whereupon the missionary, making the sign of the cross, graciously liberated him.

In the eleventh century Collwyn ap Tangno, founder of one of the noble tribes of North Wales, set up his residence in this castle, and it was called after him, Caer Collwyn.

The hero of Wales, the hapless Llewelyn, was dead and lying in a nameless grave (this fact is a disgrace to Welshmen), when Edward I. began the building of a castle on the ancient site, the ruins of which we now see. This was in 1286. Lofty towers rose on the perpendicular rock, and a prodigiously deep fosse protected them on the landward sides. The natives, who from afar could see this gauntlet of the conqueror, soon learned the impossibility of touching it.

Harlech Castle has known a changeful history. In 1404 Owain Glyndwr seized it and held it for four years. Subsequently Margaret of Anjou found refuge within its walls and from thence went forth to the victory of Wakefield. When her cause was lost, the Lancastrians had still a friend in the Governor, the brave Dafydd ap Ivan ap Einion, who refused to surrender it to the Yorkist army sent against him. This army was commanded by Sir Richard Herbert, and a description given by an old chronicler of the terrible perils by flood and famine, which it encountered in the defiles of the mountains, is enough to move even an enemy to pity.

But Dafydd was deaf alike to pity or threats, and when summoned to surrender, promptly replied—

"I held a tower in France until all the old women of Wales heard of it, and now the old women

of France shall hear how I defended this castle in Wales."

"With brazen voice was Einion called
To quit the post of glory;
With brazen voice the chief replied,
That fame should tell his story."

The siege was long, but at last famine, that grim foe before which the stoutest hearts fail, reduced the garrison to capitulation, but even then only on conditions of life and liberty.

"At length came famine, fellest foe
That ever faced a hero,
She came to Herbert as a friend,
On Einion frowned a Nero."

Sir Richard promised both conditions in the king's name, but the latter refused to ratify them, whereupon Sir Richard boldly declared: "Sire, you may if you please take my life in lieu of the Welsh captain's; if you do not comply I will most assuredly replace Dafydd in his castle, and your highness may send whom you please to take him out." Henry was too wise to insist, and Sir Richard's promise was fulfilled.

During the Civil Wars, this castle changed hands several times, and finally in 1647, it was seized by the Parliamentarian general, but Sir Hugh Pennant, the Royalist leader, was able to boast that it was the last castle in Wales to yield, as it had been the last also to bow to the usurping House of Lancaster.

Cromwell's order of destruction was only partially carried out, and its walls are still fairly perfect. "They form a square 700 yards each way, with a round tower at each corner." The spacious rooms are open to the sky, the noble hall fronts the not distant sea, and the waves which beat in ceaseless surge on the sandy traeth chant the dirge of a slow decay.

Harlech, formerly the county town, is now a mere village. Though shorn of its civic honours, its name has a world-wide fame in 'The March of the Men of Harlech,' one of the finest of patriotic songs.

In 1692 a curious piece of antiquity was dug up near Harlech. It is a golden torque, or wreathed bar of three or four rods twisted together, four feet round, with hooks at each end, to fasten it by. It was worn diagonally over one shoulder and across the breast, and the hooks at the back formed a baldric by which to suspend the quiver for arrows. These ornaments were worn by both Romans and Britons; therefore it is impossible to say to which people this one belonged.

The Greeks also wore a similar band, for Virgil, in a beautiful description of the games of the Trojan youths, alludes to this mode of carrying arrows. This valuable antique is preserved at Tremostyn Hall.

In 1694 an extraordinary phenomenon appeared in the neighbourhood of Harlech. It was a mephitic vapour, of a pale blue colour, which commencing near Criccieth, crossed the bay, and extending in every direction carried devastation in its track. It lasted for twelve days, and everything it touched was destroyed; even the grass was poisoned, for it killed the animals who fed thereon, but did not injure the people who frequently ventured into it to save their effects. The odour was abominable, and for three weeks it continued to cause great mortality amongst horses and cattle. It was conjectured that this strange blight resulted from the decomposition of a vast number of locusts who had appeared on the coast, and had been killed by the cold.

Between Harlech and Barmouth is the interesting cromlech of Koetan Arthur. It is oval in shape, and supported on pillars, two of which are between seven or eight feet high; two others, three feet high, have been evidently broken. They are all half a yard thick.

The Druids always held their meetings when the sun was above the horizon. The oldest Druid or bard, in a white surplice, stood in the centre by the side of the altar, called the Maen Llog, or Stone of Covenant, round him was a circle of stones called by a term signifying, the Circle of Federation. The

second order of Druids were also dressed in white, the third in green, and the Awenyddion, or disciples, in a variegated mantle of blue and green (blue, white, and green were the bardic colours), and they stood bare-headed, and bare-footed, round the chief Druid, and within the stone circle.

The ceremonies commenced by sheathing a sword, and laying it on the stone of the covenant. Then bardic laws and traditions were recited, and lastly sacrifices were offered.

The Druids taught that there was one Creator and Governor of the universe pervading all space as a spirit. The soul of man was immortal, but only capable of perfection by gradual advancement or transmigration—a doctrine analogous to that of the Brahmins of India—returning sometimes to a state of second manhood, and in that case it was endowed with the loftiest virtues and highest talents, and was a special blessing to the world.

It was allowable to kill all animals that were destructive to man, and propitiatory sacrifices were part of the bardic rites, even to the offering up of human victims.

The subject of human sacrifices has been one of much controversy amongst learned men, but the further investigation goes, the more the truth of this horrid practice is verified. But they were only offered when the country was in danger from

enemies, or when disease caused great mortality, or any other great calamity befell the people. It was thought that the life of man could only be redeemed by the sacrifice of a fellow-creature. Thieves, and other criminals were the usual victims, but in default of these, the innocent were doomed.

A curious vestige of this heathen rite remained in remote parts of the country long after the introduction of Christianity. If a disease broke out amongst the cattle, the farmers of the infected district would join in giving up a bullock as a propitiatory victim, and it was carried to the top of a precipice, and from thence cast down. This was called Bwrw-caeth-i-gythraul, or casting a victim to the devil.

Beirdd Ynys Prydain (bards of the island of Britain) were considered as heralds of peace, and no naked weapons were shown in their presence, and if one of them presented himself between contending armies they were obliged to cease fighting. "The time of the Druids is generally supposed to have been tinctured with much ignorance and superstition, but who would not wish that we had now men of such singular power to stop the rapine and slaughter in Europe?"

The beautiful allegory of which the following verses are a translation, is supposed to be of Druidical origin. Cwsg (sleep) was the Somnus of ancient Britain, and Einion Lonydd one of his many

priests or agents, whose "province it was to enter every dwelling where there were children *early* in the evening, leaving his sandals at the entrance, then softly approaching and at the same time beholding the child with a soothing and beneficient smile, to have sung as follows, in pianissimo, while at each repetition of the words, one, two, three—un, dau, tri—he gently drew his hand down the infant's forehead to close its twinkling eyes.

"The original British words were commonly sung to the tune of Ton-y-Fammaeth, or the Nurse's melody, but I have adapted the translation to Ar Hyd y Nos." (R. Llwyd.)

EINION LONYDD, OR EINION THE SOOTHER.

"Look at me, my little dear!
One, two, three;
Let me whisper in thine ear,
One, two, three;
Bid thy playmates all retire,
Sit thee down and draw thee nigher,
See the bright inviting fire!
One, two, three.

Supper o'er, my soul rejoices,
One, two, three;
When praise is sung by infant voices,
One, two, three;
On lap maternal now undressing,
Brothers, sisters, all caressing,
Bend the knee and beg a blessing!
One, two, three.

From toil the world itself reposes,
One, two, three;
Around him night her curtain closes,
One, two, three;
Lo! sleep thy tranquil bed adorning,
Playful dreams and plans all forming,
Rest till heaven restores the morning!
One, two, three."

There are several interesting churches on this coast; that of Llandanwog is in ruins. Mochras island, opposite Llanbedr, is noted for its rare shells.

The narrow dell of Cwm-Bychan leads us to scenes of stern grandeur, where a thunderstorm would be appalling. Fortunately for us the sun lit up the dark recesses of the mountains and the gloomy llyn of Carreg-y-Saeth (the rock of the arrow), on the shores of which a maen-hir and carnedd keep silent watch, adding to the scene the interest of a mysterious past.

Red deer once abounded in these solitudes, and the lake from its name justifies the supposition that this was a favourite hunting ground of the ancient British sportsman.

The Artro rises in Llyn-Cwm-Bychan, and, joined by many mountain streams, flows swiftly over a rocky bed, at times almost hidden by dense woods, finding its home in the sea at Llanbedr.

The escarpments of Rhinog-Fawr are the eastern boundaries of the vale, as we ascend Bwlch Tyddiad

(the open pass) by an almost uninterrupted series of stone steps.

The Drws Ardudwy (the door of Ardudwy), the maritime land, is almost parallel with that of Tyddiad, and here again these curious steps form the ascent of the defile, which winding between sterile and lofty mountains, open into some of the finest scenery in Wales. They are called "the Roman steps," and are supposed to be the work of those wonderful road-makers, the Romans. However that may be, and there are some who claim them as Nature's handiwork, it is certain that the army sent to reduce Harlech Castle under the command of the gallant Sir Richard Herbert entered the sea valley by this pass, part of it being called Lle Herbert (Herbert's track).

As one pauses in the narrow gap, the mind reverts to that long ago time, when armies toiled along the stony way, and to the fate that led them on, but the picture is dim and blurred.

The passes of Wales have been the scene of much fighting and bloodshed. Fortified and held by contending chieftains, their names survive, when the story of the deeds they commemorate are forgotten; but from Drws-yr-Ymlid (the door of pursuit), Bwlch-y-Fonllef (the pass of the long loud cry), and Coed Dial (the wood of vengeance), and many similar names, we learn how terribly rage, hatred and revenge

broke out in the days of old. Now the only danger to the traveller is to lose his way, for the mists gather swiftly on these mountains, and swooping down fill the air with vapour, leaving little else in view but the rough and narrow pathway over the slippery rocks.

CHAPTER III.

"O'er thy fair meads the rocks fantastic tower,
And fling their shadows 'cross thy bending stream."

Dolgelly (the meadow of the hazels), the county-town of Merionethshire, is disappointing on a close inspection, though the situation is charming. Even Owain Glyndwr's parliament-house has been pulled down, and with it the belief that it was ever used for that purpose. The church of St. Mary is not specially interesting, and round it are placed pell-mell massive grey stone houses, which are, however, relieved from monotony by their bright little gardens where fuchsias and hydrangeas grow to a great size.

Coarse cloth, called webs, and flannels are manufactured in the neighbourhood, and give employment not only to regular workmen, but to the inhabitants of many a mountain-farm in the intervals of other labour.

Cadr Idris (Arthur's chair), the end of a chain of igneous stratified rocks, towers over Dolgelly. For stupendous cliffs and grandeur of outline, Cadr is peerless; not even Snowdon has such broken and

serrated lines, or darker, more mysterious hollows, or more awful-looking precipices. On its summit our simple ancestors believed that in a cloudy robe, "dwelt Arthur on his throne—a spiritual king sublime, alone."

> "Marshalling tempests over half the globe,
> Or kindlier now by summer zephyrs fann'd,
> Blessing invisibly his native land."

Hills covered with gorse and ling, wooded ravines, fair or gloomy as the seasons go, surround this beautiful mountain of three pinnacles. The highest, Pen-y-cadr (head of the chair), is 2929 feet above the level of the sea; the second is Mynydd-Moel (cone-like hill); and the third, Craig-y-Cae (crag of the enclosure).

No mountain in Wales has such a wreck of stones as Cadr, for it has been worn down by wind and rain, storm and tempest, for countless ages, and only the hardest rocks—porphyry, quartz, and felspar—form the broken ridges of the top.

From them the views over land and sea are magnificent. Northward, the estuary of the Mawddach, and the mountains of Llewllech, and Llethr, and if the atmosphere is clear, Snowdonia.

Westward the great curve of Cardigan Bay, from the Isle of Saints almost to St. David's Head. North-east the wild Arenigs, and east the Arans pierce the clouds, and beyond Bala Lake, the Berwyn

range slopes towards the fertile meads of Shropshire. Southward lie the huge mass of Plinlimmon, and the vale of the Dysenni, with the curious bird rock, Craig-y-Deryn, the home of countless sea fowl.

The nearer view discloses Llyn-y-Cae, in the hollow of an immense cwm, encircled by an amphitheatre of hills.

At the foot of the northern escarpment is Llyn-y Gadr (lake of the chair), a fine sheet of water, and near it is the Foxes' Path, by which, though stony and rough, the descent of the mountain is frequently made.

Away to the west are the twin lakes of Craigenau, nestling under one of the lower hills. A little to the east of Llyn-y-Gadr is Llyn Tri-graienyn (lake of the three pebbles), named after three huge fragments of rock, which, tradition says, Idris threw out of his shoe after a mountain ramble. As one measures twenty-four feet long, and eighteen broad, there can be no doubt that the wearer of it was a giant.

In a pleasant valley to the south lies Llyn Mwyngil, the largest of the lakes round Cadr. Trout are plentiful, and anglers know it.

On one of the surrounding mountains is the fearful-looking precipice of Llam-y-Lladron (thieves' leap). It is said to have been the place from whence criminals were hurled in the days when each chief was a judge, from whose fiat there was no appeal.

In the parish of Llangelynin, the church of St. Celynin, a native missionary of the sixth century, there is shown a cave on the seashore where Owain Glyndwr was once in hiding. A celebrity of this village was a man called "Lusty Morgan," who is said to have fought Henry VIII. in the streets of London, and to have nearly thrown him, and that it was only on the approach of the guards that he discovered the rank of his antagonist. Struck with horror, he cried for mercy, and the king, slapping him on the back, bade him begone, calling him a "lusty fellow," a term he proudly claimed all his life.

Llanegryn Church is very ancient, and contains a beautiful font and rood-screen.

Towyn has fine sands, but from its exposed situation looks bare and dreary. It has a beautiful old cruciform church dedicated to St. Cadfan. The nave is early Norman, and it is separated from the aisles by "immensely thick piers supporting round arches."

Cadfan, a prince of Armorica, with a company of friends—all persons of distinction—came over to Britain and devoted themselves to the conversion of the heathen. The Franks under Clovis were at this time—the beginning of the sixth century—establishing their dominion in Gaul, and analogy suggests that the loss of territory was the reason that induced them to leave their country.

From a poem written about 1250, we learn that St. Cadfan's Church possessed three altars. The first, St. Mary's; the second, St. Peter's; and the third—"happy was the town in its privilege of possessing it, for it was sent by a hand from heaven"—was dedicated to the founder. The poem proceeds to praise "its choir and sanctuary, and its music, its warriors, and its waters of grace."

An interesting relic, called St. Cadfan's Stone, lies against the south wall of the church. It is seven feet high, and has been the source of much controversy. The words inscribed are on the four sides, and translated, run thus:—

"Beneath the mount of Cynvael lies Cadfan, where the earth extols his praise. Let him rest without a blemish. The body of Cyngen. And between will be Marcian" (Mark).

There is a tradition that St. Cadfan was buried in the monastery of Bardsey Island, of which he was the founder and first abbot; therefore this stone is probably a memorial to him and his friends.

He was titular saint of warriors—doubtless he had led a military life in his native land. St. Cadfan's Well was celebrated in the Middle Ages for the cure of various complaints, especially rheumatism.

Ynysmaengwyn (the island of the white stone) is the home of the Corbets, the well-known bene-

factors of the district, and Peniarth that of the ancient family of the Wynnes. Both houses are on the banks of the Dysynni, a river which fertilises the valley of that name, and falls into the sea near Towyn.

At Peniarth are preserved the celebrated Hengwrt MSS., the most interesting of Welsh MSS. in Europe, those in the British Museum alone excepted. Among them is the 'Sanct Grael,' the 'Black Book of Caermarthen,' part of which was written about 1190, and the 'Book of Taliesin,' written about 1200.

Aberdovey, sheltered by wooded hills, with firm sands, and with the estuary at its feet, offers numberless attractions to tourists, and has a world-wide reputation from that beautiful Welsh song, "The Bells of Aberdovey," first brought into popular notice by Eos Cymry, the "nightingale of Wales," Miss E. Wynne.

The Dovey estuary is broad and breezy, but not equal in scenery to the Mawddach. The southern shore forms the boundary between north and south Wales.

Llyn Barfog (bearded lake) is a lovely sheet of water near Aberdovey, and receives its name from a story of a terrible *afanc*, or crocodile, who did so much mischief, that Hu Gadarn (the mighty) yoked horned oxen to the beast, and dragged him into the

lake, where he was drowned. The same story is told of a lake in Caernarvonshire. Legends of the Gwragedd-Annon (dames of fairyland) who are said to haunt Barfog, are still told.

At Pennal (brow head) there was a Roman station, and the church dedicated to St. Peter was built out of its ruins.

A beautiful lady, Lucy Lloyd—in Welsh, Lleusi Llwyd—lived at Pennal, and her fate was very sad. She was beloved by the bard Llewelyn Goch, but her father, who objected to the match, contrived that he should be sent away on a long journey. Letters were seldom written in 1402, and during his absence, Lleusi's father told her that her lover was dead, and he showed her what appeared proof of the fact. The poor girl, never doubting, pined away and died. Her miserable father, too proud to confess his treachery, and hoping to the last that her illness was temporary, fled from the neighbourhood.

When Llewelyn returned, his grief and anger were terrible, he spent hours at Lleusi's grave, and composed to her memory the most beautiful elegy in the Welsh language.

Poised on the slope of a nearly perpendicular hill, is Dinas Mawddwy (the city of overflowing waters), once one of the five independent lordships of Wales.

It is singularly romantic in situation. The road winds round in a curve, and the houses are dotted about it following the same line, and below are the three lovely vales of the Ceryst, and the upper and lower Dyfi.

After the Wars of the Roses this neighbourhood fell into bad repute as the haunt of large numbers of felons and outlaws, who, committing every sort of crime, were the terror of the country round. At last a commission was appointed, and Baron Owen, with a strong body of soldiers, was sent to redress these grievances. About a hundred of the ring-leaders were taken, and variously punished—many were hanged. In revenge some of their friends met the judge as he was passing through some thick woods, escorted only by one person, and most cruelly murdered him. This was in 1550. The place where the deed was committed is still called Llidiart-y-Barwn (the gate of the baron).

After this, very rigorous measures were adopted, and the dreaded Gwylliaid-Cochion-Mawddwy (the red-haired banditti of Mawddwy) were all taken, tried, and either executed or transported, and the country side was safe. It is said that the first captains of the Gwylliaid had been at one time men of property, and owners of "eighty hearths," and that they had become robbers through oppression.

The houses in this wild country are very sub-

stantial, with very wide chimneys, and being often built against the hill, are thereby easy of access.

Formerly the inhabitants placed scythes in the chimneys at night to prevent intruders.

A traveller at the beginning of this century had the curiosity to examine a house of this description from the chimney, but instead of a scythe he saw "a far more pleasing object," viz., a young woman cooking a joint of mountain mutton. He asked her in a loud voice the way to Mawddwy, whereupon she gave a shriek and sprang back, at which we can scarcely wonder. But recovering from her surprise, she called out, "Straight forward." The traveller replied, that if he did that he should spoil her broth. She then appeared at the door, and "in a merry mood" gave him the information; which, he adds, "I did not want."

An old rhyme says—

> "In Mawddwy black three things remain,
> False men, blue earth, and ceaseless rain,
> Of these they'd gladly riddance gain."

In this region of hills rain still falls long and often, but the stigma of the first item has long ago passed away. I do not know whether shepherds still mark their sheep with the bluish ochre which used to be got for that purpose from some deserted lead mines.

The mansion of Plas-Dinas-Mawddwy is finely

situated at the foot of Moel-y-Ddinas (hill of the city). All around are small wooded vales, bold rocks, and innumerable streams. At Pont Fallwyd there is a charming waterfall, and at Mallwyd the scenery is extremely picturesque.

The broken rocks of Camlan lie westward, and far away through grassy openings are seen the deep *cwms* and lofty peaks of Aran Benllyn, 2902 feet high.

Under Aran Mawddwy the Dovey takes its rise, and two miles north is the ancient village of Llan-y-Mawddwy (the church of the overflowing water).

The glen here is long and narrow, and the meadows very small, and in their midst, near a pretty waterfall, is the venerable ivy-clad church dedicated to St. Tydecho.

Peat is extensively used for fuel, and as the turbaries are on the tops of the hills, and impassable for horses, it is procured by means of a light sledge, which requires careful management when loaded and gliding down the slippery steeps.

The country between Mawddwy and Bala is very wild, secluded, and silent—"the outskirts of a stormy sea of mountains stretching across Bwlch-y-groes" (the pass of the cross—so named from a lofty cross that once crowned the summit) "as far as Bala Lake northward, and as far as Cadr Idris westward,

with scarcely room for the rivulets and the high roads to pass side by side between."

The outlet westward is Bwlch-Oer-Ddrws (the pass of the cold door), an appropriate name for this bleak and rugged passage. This spot—the scene of many a fight—was chosen by the chiefs of the district after the death of Owain Glyndwr for a place of council to discuss plans for the better government of the country.

Carneddau, and tumuli, are very numerous on these hill-sides. Their origin and use form a fruitful theme of controversy among antiquarians, and there are prosaic minds who boldly declare them to be simply heaps of stone brought together when the surrounding fields were cleared for cultivation.

However, research has proved that many of them are the sites of graves, generally of warriors slain in battle, to whose honour or dishonour, as the case might be, every passer-by would add a stone to the original pile. "Carn-ar-dy-wyneb" (A carn on thy face) is a proverb which suggests more hatred than affection.

These tumuli generally contain either a cistvaen (small chest), or else a cromlech, crom (crooked), lech (a flat stone), with a covered passage leading to it—that is to say, if it is not a cairn hastily thrown up on a battlefield over the bodies of the slain.

The cromlech is pretty well proved to be a monumental memorial, sometimes the actual tomb of the mighty dead, and not an altar, as was once supposed.

Druidical circles frequently surround tumuli, and in that case are doubtless sacrificial.

The Britons interred their dead, but the Roman custom of cremation became prevalent during their occupation of the country. In some later carneddau stone coffins have been found, but in the older ones the mode of burial was this. The dead body was laid on the bare sward, plastered over with clay, and covered with dry turf. A fire was then made over it with furze and wood, until the corpse was reduced to ashes. Then the charcoal and ashes were covered with earth and stones.

At Drws-y-nant (door of the brook) we are on the summit of the watershed of this part of the country, and the surroundings are bleak and dreary. A farmhouse here is in the singular position of standing at the point where the rain from the eaves on one side finds its way ultimately into the sea at Chester, and from the other, into the sea at Barmouth.

The village of Llanuwchllyn (church above the lake) is pleasantly situated at the western extremity of Bala Lake.

The church is long, low, and old, and contains a

curious monument to a warrior. He is represented in a conical helmet, and round his neck and chin is a chain muffler, and on his breast a wolf's head. Lower down there are three roses, and then another wolf's head.

Caer Gai, in this parish, is the name of an ancient Roman fort; but the broken walls on the craggy rock are also associated with that great hero of Celtic romance, the peerless Arthur, who is said to have resided here with his foster-brother, Cai-hir (Cai, the Tall).

Spenser, in 'The Faery Queen,' says:

"Unto old Timon* he me brought to live,
In warlike feats the expertest man alive,
And is the wisest now on earth I ween;
His dwelling is low in valley green,
Under the foot of Rauran† mossie hore,
From whence the river Dee as silver clean
His tumbling billows roll with gentle rore,
Here all his days he trained me up in virtuous lore."

A terrible waterspout fell in this neighbourhood during a fair in June, 1781, and the greatest consternation prevailed among the assembled crowds; lives were lost, and great numbers of cattle perished, five bridges and many houses were destroyed, and enormous stones were hurled down the rivers Twrch and Clynhwyd.

Large tracts of land were deluged, and the crops

* Classical name for Arthur. † Yr Aran.

destroyed. It is said that part of a house, with an old woman sitting in her chair, floated away into Bala Lake, and that she was safely rescued from her perilous position.

Llanycil (church of the recess) is dedicated to St. Beuno, the hot-tempered saint of Clynnog. In this parish is Castell-Carn-Dochan, an ancient British fort, and near it are some remarkable stones; the largest, called Carreg Diddios (shelter stone), has both ends tilted up; the base, touching the ground, is of very small dimensions. In this neighbourhood there is a gold mine which once yielded a fair profit, but when, from the great depth the miners had to go, it was found to cost £1 5*s.* to raise £1 of ore, the venture was abandoned.

We are now at the source of the river Dee—the royal river. It trickles a tiny streamlet from under a hill called Duallt, and may be termed a tributary of Bala Lake; but unlike the sister streams of the Twrch, the Afron, the Llyn, and the Lledr, it holds its own, and emerges on the eastern shores, and, joined by the Cellyn and other rivers, flows through the lovely vale of Edeirnion a stately river.

The meaning of its name is variously rendered. In Welsh it is Dyfrdwy (twin river), from its supposed source in two fountains, and probably its usual name of Dee is an anglicised form of Du (black), the pronunciation being nearly identical. The

banks of this river are extremely interesting, and present a wide field for archæological research.

Bala Lake—Llyn Tegid, or Pimblemere (the lake of five parishes), is the largest lake in Wales, being four miles long, and nearly a mile wide in some places. There is good fishing and boating, and formerly it contained quantities of gwyniad, a species of trout without scales. The legend of a drowned city beneath its waters is told of numerous lakes in different countries of Europe, but the bardic story of the formation of this sheet of water, though analogous, is far more poetic.

Long ago, when Britain was governed by chieftains, each ruling by the might of his own strong arm, there dwelt in the fair vale of Edeirnion a prince of renown. He was rich and powerful, and very wicked, and the peasants whose huts clustered round the base of his castle walls were very wretched, for their lives were in his hands, and his will and his temper knew no bounds.

But the conscience of Howel ap Einion was not dead, and in the midst of revelry and feasting its still small voice cried out, "Repentance will come! Repentance will come!" Angry and wearied of its frequent warning, he one day asked aloud—

"When will repentance come?" And the voice replied, "At the second generation"—and instantly a terrific thunderclap broke over the mountains, and

the echoes rang out into the wide distances with mournful throbs.

But the prince heeded not the warning, and careless alike of God and man, went on in his crimes, plundering and murdering those who were weaker than himself, and when he heard the faint sound of solemn chanting from the hill-side oratory, he laughed long and loud and scornfully.

A time of great rejoicing came to Einion's Castle, for an heir was born to the prince, and the old harper was summoned from his mountain cottage to play the "Welcomes" to the lovely boy. Feasting went on day and night, and proud-eyed knights and damsels, with "necks white as a morning cloud," danced to the old man's music.

One night, in the pause in the high revelry, the harper was resting in his corner alone, when he heard a voice, half whispering, half singing, say to him, "Repentance, repentance"—and following the sound he saw hovering in the air above him, a little bird which beckoned him to follow, but when he did so, he found that it led him beyond the castle gates, and he hesitated; but the little bird continued to beckon and repeat the ominous words.

The old man was afraid to refuse, so they went on over bush and brake, the bird always flying in advance and guiding him by the safest paths; and if he paused a moment, it wailed again, "Repentance,

repentance." At last, they reached the top of a mountain, and the harper sank down on a stone, faint and weary.

Hearing no sound, he looked up for the bird; it was no longer there—the gurgling of a tiny stream, the fountain-head of a mighty river, alone broke the silence. Then he looked towards the valley, thinking that he would be missed in the castle hall, but all he saw was a vast surging lake; the palace had disappeared, but floating on the surface of the water was his harp, the only thing saved besides himself in the great deluge.

At Llanfor the scenery is very charming; the lake, like a huge silver shield, is surrounded by pastures and verdant slopes, and, far away, towers the serrated head of Aran Benllyn.

The celebrated prince and bard, Llywarch Hen (Llywarch the aged), died at Llanfor in A.D. 660, at the age of 145. His misfortunes were as great as his age; for, when he sought refuge on the shores of Bala lake, his twenty-four sons were dead—slain in fruitless battles, and he was bereft of all his possessions. The cruel Saxons had even followed his friend, Prince Cynddylan, with relentless fury, because he had given him shelter; and in a terrible fight Cynddylan had been slain.

In one of his poems, Llywarch describes, in simple and affecting language, the misfortunes and sorrows

of his old age. After describing the rush of battle, and the strife for country and liberty, he goes on :—

"But I no more in youthful pride
Can dare the steep rock's haughty side,
For fell disease my sinews rend,
My arm unnerves, my stout heart bends,
And raven locks now silver grey
Keep me from the field away.

"Oh, fatal day! oh, ruthless deed!
Breathless lies and drenched in blood
Four and twice ten sons were mine,
Used in battle's front to shine;
But low in dust my sons are laid,
Nor one remains his sire to aid."

Some of Llywarch's poems are valuable, showing us a good deal of the manners and customs of the times. The plough tracing the furrow, drawn by oxen ; drinking-vessels of glass and horn ; shields of gold ; silver ornaments ; coffins of black wood, and funeral mounds of earth and stones, covered with greensward, and "set with oak saplings."

The church of Llanfor is dedicated to St. Mor and St. Deiniol, a double dedication not uncommon in Wales.

The town of Bala (the outlet) is situated at the northern end of the lake, and is a pleasant little place, with a good grammar school, and a Calvinistic Methodist College, established in memory of the Rev. J. Charles, the founder of Sunday-schools in Wales.

Close to the town is a tomen, said to be of Roman origin, and well worth ascending for the lovely views. At hand the silver Dee winds its sinuous way through a verdant vale. Away to the right the purple crest of Arenig-fawr rises defiant in the air. To the left are the two Arans; and, in the distance, Cadr Idris.

Plas Rhiwedog (the palace of the bloody brow), from a battle fought here between Llywarch Hen and the Saxons, when his last and youngest son was slain, is now a modern house; but tradition lingers round the ancient family, who have lived on the spot from pre-historic times, and who trace an unbroken descent from Gwynedd, Prince of Wales. A curious stone is preserved at Rhiwedog, which, according to legend, opens at the death of a member of the family.

Llanderfel once possessed an enormous wooden image of St. Derfel Gadarn (Derfel the Mighty), and pilgrimages were made to his shrine by those desirous of rescuing their friends from the torments of hell. There was an old prophecy that the image should "make a forest blaze"; and in the reign of Henry VIII., by means of a ghastly joke, and for the object of bringing the superstition into disrepute, it was made to come true.

A friar named Forest having been condemned to be burnt at the stake for denying the king's supremacy,

the image was sent to London to serve as fuel for the fire. The following verses were written on the event:—

"David Darfel Gatheren,
As sayeth the Welshmen,
Fetched outlaws out of hell;
Now he is come with spere and shield
In harness to burn in Smithfield,
For in Wales he may not dwell."

The church of Llandderfel contains a beautiful screen; also St. Derfel's staff and his wooden horse.

On our road lies Llandrillo, where the Dee is broad and full. The patron saint of the church here,—St. Trillo, was a holy man of Armorica, who accompanied St. Cadfan into Wales. The churchyard is very large, and there—

"beneath the yew tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

South of Llandrillo is Cadr Fronwen (2575 feet); and, near it, is Llyn Mynyllod (lake of sods), famous for its floating islands.

Our next halt was at Llangar (church of the fort), dedicated to All Saints. In the vicinity there is a Druidical circle, and the remains of a carnedd.

The waterfall of Rhayadr-Cynwyd is in a neighbouring dingle. It is formed by the river Trystwn,

which rushes through a deep and narrow chasm, and leaps from rock to rock.

Corwen (white choir) has a fine church, dedicated to St. Mael and St. Sulien—companions of Cadfan. This town is the central point of four fertile little valleys. The bridge over the Dee is handsome, and there is a good hospital, and also an almshouse for the widows of Merionethshire clergymen. A pretty and pleasant town, its chief interest to the stranger lies in the past, for it was the home and patrimony of Owain Glyndwr—a hero whose memory is ever green to all true patriots, and to Welshmen in particular.

A descendant of the gallant race of Llewelyn the Great, Owain was born in 1348, at the castle of Sycharth, near Corwen, and just within the borders of this county. His real name was Owain Gryffydd, and the more general appellation of Glyndwr, or Glyndwrdwy, was derived from words signifying, "The Glen of the waters of the Dee"—in the valleys of which river lay his large possessions.

The true history of Glyndwr has yet to be written, for perhaps no hero has been more maligned. Lancastrian and Tudor chronicles call him "that wretched rebel Glyndwr," and Shakespeare, taking the tone of the day when a Welshman was "an arrant knave," sees but little virtue in his patriotism.

But Y Gwir yn erbyn y byd (the truth against the world) is an old Welsh proverb, which we see verified as time discloses the secrets of the past.

In his youth Owain was a barrister, and a man of note and rising fame; subsequently he became squire of the body to Richard II., and when that unfortunate king was deposed, he retired into Wales.

When Henry IV. was established on the throne, he summoned his nobility to assist him in an expedition against the Scots, and Lord Grey de Ruthyn was entrusted with the issuing of the writs to the Welsh barons.

This nobleman held lands adjoining Glyndwr's, and they had had disputes and a lawsuit respecting boundaries. Here was an opportunity for revenge on the Welshman who had dared to claim his own, and Grey purposely detained the writ that called on Glyndwr to render service to the king; and further, represented that his absence was an act of wilful disobedience. Currying favour with the offended monarch, he received permission to seize the lands of Glyndwr, under pretence of forfeiture.

The times were cruel. Laws were still in existence that forbade any Welshman to hold the smallest public office, and every town and castle, even if it belonged to them, was garrisoned by the English.

They could not purchase land, and in lawsuits between them and Englishmen, the latter could only be convicted by their countrymen. If an English burgess married a Welshwoman he was disfranchised. Without a licence they could not meet together for any purpose, and, moreover, these tyrannous statutes "forbade Welshmen to bring up their children as scholars, or to apprentice them to any occupation, within any town or borough of the realm."

Outnumbered and conquered, yet not subdued, the natives repaid insult with the deadliest hatred. "Tri pheth a vyddant oreu pan a'u croger: gleisiad hallt, het wlêb, a charn Sais" (three things which are best when hung—a salt salmon, a wet hat, and an arrant Saxon). So says one of the Triads.

At the time of this forfeiture, Owain was of middle age, and married, with many children, and his sons grown up, all of whom fell in battle. Out of his own wrong came the opportunity to try once more to throw off the galling chain that held the necks of his countrymen to the ground. The details of the rebellion at the head of which Owain placed himself are too many to describe here, but neither Henry nor his generals had the skill or energy to quell the intrepid warrior, who, with forces out of all proportion smaller than theirs, kept them at bay for fifteen years.

Bards sang his praises, and his fame and influence

were such that he was credited with supernatural powers. Shakespeare makes him say—

> "I can call spirits from the vasty deep,
> Why, I can teach your cousins to command the devil."

It was consummate skill and military genius, urged on by the groans of a downtrodden people, that inspired Owain's proud spirit. He achieved rapid marches—for his followers knew every pass and mountain refuge—and, appearing suddenly before his enemies, drove them to destruction. Castle after castle fell before his impetuous attacks, and in his wrath he burnt them down; even many religious houses shared the same fate. He destroyed the cathedrals of Bangor and St. Asaph—outrages not to be excused, except partially in the case of the latter, whose bishop, Trevor, had been disloyal to King Richard, from whom he had received his preferments. This severity had the curious effect of detaching Trevor from the cause of Henry IV. He allied himself with Glyndwr, remaining faithful to him until his fortunes declined, when he fled abroad.

Glyndwr has been called the Oliver Cromwell of Wales, and the expression has caught the ear; but the motives which induced these two men to destroy the strongholds of their opponents were widely different, and, except in the acts of destruction, there is no comparison.

From all quarters English troops were poured

into the country; Glyndwr was proclaimed a rebel, and free pardons were offered to all who would desert his cause.

Many did so; but the storms and bewildering mists of his wild land, while they harassed his enemies, were his sure and trusty friends, and he went on from success to success.

But the men who followed his standards were restless and quarrelsome. Independence was impossible in a land governed by divided counsels, and Glyndwr failed slowly and surely. It was for the greater happiness and liberty of his country, there is no doubt, for Wales alone could never achieve peace and prosperity. United to her ancient foe, she has both, for "Union is strength."

Owain Glyndwr was, for a considerable time, *de facto* Prince of Wales, and was acknowledged as such by the King of France, who would not bestow the regal title on his opponent, whose right to reign in England was far less legal than that of Owain in Wales. "Even when his cause was lost, he maintained the dignity of sovereign throughout the least accessible parts of the country."

When Henry V. became king he deputed Sir Gilbert Talbot to negotiate with Glyndwr, with promises of pardon to him and his adherents if they would ask for it; but the Pendragon, who had so often carried the Star of Wales to victory, was still

"unsubmissive and unsubdued," though old and feeble, and nigh unto death.

Two months after Sir Gilbert's visit, in the September of 1415,—Owain Glyndwr died at the house of his youngest daughter, Margaret, the wife of Roger Monnington, of Monnington, in the county of Hereford.

> "'Tis man's bold task the generous strife to try,
> But in the hands of God is victory."

Shakespeare gave him but his due when he makes him say:

> "Three times hath Henry Bolingbroke made head
> Against my powers. Thrice from the banks of Wye
> And sandy-bottomed Severn have I sent
> Him bootless home, and weather-beaten back."

Iolo Goch (Iolo the red), the bard and friend of Glyndwr, describes Sycharth Castle, the site of which alone remains. It was a lordly mansion, having a gate-house and a moat. Within its precincts there were "fine halls, each furnished with its own wardrobe." Within the moat there was a cruciform church, with chapels adjacent, and on a verdant bank there was a wooden house covered with tiles, and supported on posts, containing apartments for the reception of guests. Around lay a park, with orchards and stately trees, a dovecot, a warren, a vineyard, and a lake full of gwyniads (white trout), and also a heronry.

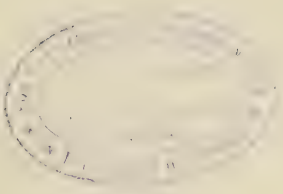
Hospitality was extended alike to the noble, with

his train of men-at-arms, the wayfarer or the beggar in his rags. Honesty reigned, for in Owain's house there were neither locks nor bolts, and beside him on the hearth sat his beneficent wife and his beautiful children.

In this border corner of the county is Rhaggats (front of the host), the home of a branch of the Lloyds. Here a curious cross in the form of a Roman lamp, and similar to those discovered in the Catacombs, was found in 1801. It has a perforation at the top, doubtless for the purpose of suspension round the neck, or to the girdle; and from the place in which it was found, fancy makes it easy to picture it worn at some great gathering of the Cymry on the adjoining Caer-y-Drewyn. The date of the cross is unknown, and it was no doubt religiously preserved from generation to generation as a holy relic.

At Rhug, Gruffydd ap Cynan, king of Gwynedd (North Wales), was betrayed into the hands of Hugh, earl of Chester, surnamed from his savage disposition Lupus, and carried in chains to Chester Castle. After lingering in close captivity twelve years, he was released by Cymric the Tall, who, taking advantage of a revel, and consequently relaxed vigilance, carried him off on his back, fettered as he was, to a place of safety.

In the church of Bettws-Gwerfel-goch (the station in the red vale), there is a beautiful screen, well worth visiting.



Pembrokeshire. PART OF BISHOP GOWER'S PALACE AND CHAPEL AT ST. DAVID'S.

PEMBROKESHIRE.

CHAPTER I.

GWLAD YR HUD (THE LAND OF ENCHANTMENT AND MYSTERY).

"Where on steep and on crag,
Streamed banner and flag,
And the pennons and plumage of war."

A VERY ancient name of this part of Wales was Dyfed—by the Romans changed to Demetia; but its present designation differs very slightly from that by which it was known in the Middle Ages—Pen-fro (corner or promontory land), and its bold irregular coast, occupying the south-western extremity of Britain, fully justifies the title.

On the east and north-east, Pembrokeshire is bounded by the counties of Cardigan and Caermarthen. On the west, north-west, and south, it is exposed to the fury of the sea.

From Cardigan Head to St. Gowan's Head,

Pembrokeshire is about thirty-six miles in length, and from St. Ann's Head to Amroth, twenty-five miles in breadth; but following the windings of the storm-beaten coast, it is over one hundred miles. The area of the whole county is 628 square miles.

This county returns three members to Parliament: one for the county; one for Haverfordwest, St. David's, Fishguard and Narberth; and one for Pembroke, Tenby, Milford and Wiston. The population at the last census was 91,986, showing a considerable decrease during the previous ten years.

St. Bride's Bay, nine miles deep, and as many wide, is the largest opening on the coast. Off its northern horn lies Ramsay Island, two miles long and one broad; separated from the mainland by a narrow strait, flanked by beetling cliffs, which in the spring of the year swarm with sea-fowl. At the southern end are several islets. It is tolerably fertile, rears sheep, and produces grain. On Sundays, Ramsay is frequently quite deserted, the whole population coming over to church, or chapel, on the mainland.

Near Ramsay are seven small islets, called, The Bishop and his Clerks. Of these, an old writer says: "They preache deadly doctrine to a winter audience —poor seafaring men who are forced thither by tempest;" and then continues, "onlie in one thing are they to be commended, they keepe residence

better than the rest of the Canons of that See are wont to do."

Overhanging the cliff of Porthstinan—the cove from whence travellers take boat for Ramsay—are the ruins of the votive chapel of St. Justinian (Capel-Stinan), the friend and confessor of St. David. Legend says he was murdered by the natives of Ramsay, and that his body swam across to this spot.

On the cliffs of Caerbwddy are the purple sandstone quarries, which furnished most of the stone of which the Cathedral of St. David's is built, and near at hand are the scanty remains of St. Nonne's Chapel. St. Nonne was St. David's mother, and here, according to tradition, he was born.

Off the southern horn of St. Bride's Bay are the old pirate isles of Skomer, Shokholm and Grassholm, which by their names show to what nationality the pirates belonged, and at a distance of eighteen miles in the same direction is the Smalls lighthouse. The rock on which it stands is surrounded by twenty others of various sizes, and from it a beacon light has flashed for more than one hundred years. Still further west is a dangerous group called The Hat and Barrels, and the sea around is "agitated by a conflict of the wildest tides, whose enraged face betrays the dangerous secrets of its bosom."

There is also a lighthouse on the South Bishop.

The cliffs that encircle St. Bride's Bay, although never very high, are much broken, and very precipitous. They are composed of Cambrian and Old Red Sandstone rock, penetrated and metamorphosed here and there by igneous rock, and present a great variety of form and especially of colour—brilliant orange and soft grey-greens, blue, purple, and pink, blended in perfect harmony.

St. David's Head, the Octopitarum of the ancients, and, next to Land's End, the most westerly point in Great Britain, crowns the northern horn of the Bay. Rugged, dark, and bold, strewn with huge boulders, and encompassed with half-sunken rocks, round which the white crested waves are ever chafing, it is strangely weird and impressive. Like some great antediluvian monster, surviving the convulsions of earthquake and storm, it confronts the savage sea with stony insistence. In the clefts of the rocks pretty crystals, called St. David's diamonds, are found, and as you ascend from Whitesand Bay, the half-fallen stones of a cromlech (beside which are some ancient hut-circles) cut the sea-line.

Three miles from St. David's Head is St. David's City, a place which in interest, fame, and antiquity, surpasses everything in the Principality.

The long drive from Haverfordwest, the nearest railway station, of sixteen miles, up and down sixteen hills, ends in a narrow village street.

Small houses, whitewashed to the roof, planted about anyhow, and a noble Iona Cross on a lofty pedestal of steps, met our inquiring gaze; but where was the cathedral?—the goal of our pilgrimage over a treeless plain.

Leaving our carriage we walked down a steep pebbly way, and there in a deep hollow, like a carved rock between us and the sea, rose the great strong tower. Each step was a revelation. Passing through the imposing Tower Gate, sixty feet high, with its graceful octagonal guard room, the ruins of palace and college, the belt of trees in the valley bed, the far-off sea, and the crimson sky of sunset formed a scene of marvellous picturesqueness.

Descending the forty steps and the churchyard path, with innumerable graves on either hand, no pilgrim of the past, wayworn and weary from the dangers of the road, which made two pilgrimages to St. David's equal to one to Rome—the old monkish rhyme is, "Roma semel quantum bis dat Menevia tantum"—could have been more awed and impressed than we were.

We entered the cathedral by the south porch, the low evening light softened and idealised the complicated richness of the Romanesque mouldings of the arches of the nave, the graceful clerestory, with its deep windows above and the solemn purple colouring of the stone, which is moreover the oldest

sedimentary rock in the kingdom, the flat carved ceiling of Irish oak with its delicate carving, and away in the distant choir, glimpses of bright gilding and colour, and the rich rare mosaics of the eastern wall.

As the days passed in the old-world city, it was very pleasant to wander at will through this noble building, the restoration of which was begun by Bishop Thirlwall in 1864, with Sir G. Scott as architect, or among the surrounding ruins. There are no guides, though once we had the good fortune to hear the dean's lucid description of many special points of interest.

St. David, the patron saint of Wales, and "one of the brightest lights of Christ's Church," founded a monastery at this place towards the close of the fifth century, and when he succeeded Dubricius as Archbishop of Caerleon, he removed to it the Metropolitan See; partly, it is said, to be near Ireland, where his friend St. Patrick was labouring as a missionary. It was even then a place of note, the Menevia or Menapia of the Romans, and the termini of their two great roads, the Via Julia and the Via Flandrica; but the fame of St. David became so great, that it not only assumed his name, but the adjoining country was called Dewi's land, a term it still retains.

The cathedral and monastic buildings were fre-

quently burnt and plundered by Danes and pirates —"black heathen," the monks called them, but the zeal and patience of St. David's followers were rewarded by the protection of the native princes, and in time the church grew into a mighty power, numbering seven suffragans within its pale. Twenty-six bishops held the mitre in succession, and the fame of St. David's shrine brought multitudes of pilgrims from all parts, and vast revenues to the ecclesiastics.

The present structure was commenced in A.D. 1176, in the reign of Henry I., by Bishop Peter de Leia, and is cruciform, with transepts nearly dividing the length into equal parts. It is 307 feet long within the walls, the pavement rising considerably towards the choir. The arches of the nave are Transitional-Norman, resting on massive pillars; those on the north side bulge outward in consequence of an earthquake in 1220, when the tower fell. The present tower rises from the centre of the building, and is of great solidity, springing from Early English arches. The choir-screen or rood-loft is double, and is a very fine example of the Decorated style. It is ascended by steps, and contains four richly carved tombs; one of them, that of Bishop Gower, the great church builder of Wales in the fourteenth century. Above the screen is the new organ.

The choir, mainly under the central tower, is richly and delicately carved. The devout and refined heads and faces on the finials of the stalls are strangely at variance with the carvings on the misere seats below. One of the latter represents a cowled fox offering the wafer to a goose with a human head. Another, a boat with monks, tossing on a very wavy sea; one of the occupants is leaning over the side with an abject air, evidently in the agonies of sea-sickness, while a companion, grinning with amusement, is holding his head. No doubt the scene was frequently enacted, for Ramsay Island and its oratories were under the care of the monks, and in all weathers they would be compelled to cross the stormy sound.

The bishop's throne, with three seats, a masterpiece of carved work, is at the south end of the choir, which is here separated from the presbytery by a lovely screen placed slantwise. Within this is the tomb of Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond, father of Henry VII. On the south side of the presbytery are several richly carved tombs of ecclesiastics; one of them supposed to be that of Giraldus Cambrensis; and on the opposite side is the far-famed shrine of the patron saint. There is very little of the old work left, but the whole has been carefully restored. It is faced with arches, in the spandrels of which are apertures communicating

with lockers inside, to receive the offerings of the faithful. The bones of the saint, together with many valuables, were stolen before the Reformation.

The altar is approached by a series of broad shallow steps, worn down by the knees of worshippers. The old encaustic tiles of the pavement are still preserved. The three windows above, which were blocked when Bishop Vaughan built his chapel eastward, are filled with beautiful mosaics, and above them again are painted lancet windows.

The nave and aisles, and the numerous side chapels, contain monuments of mailed knight, and mitred priest, and Elizabethan worthy, extremely interesting to the antiquarian. The chapels of St. Andrew (joint patron of the cathedral) and St. Thomas à Becket, besides much other work, have been restored by the generosity of the present dean, at whose expense the work of restoration is solely carried on.

Bishop Vaughan's chapel has a beautiful vaulted roof of fan tracery. The Lady Chapel, approached by a pilgrim's ambulatory, is in ruins, as are also several other side chapels. The cathedral library, a quaint chamber with two fine windows and a noteworthy fireplace, is within the walls.

A few steps from the north door of the nave are the ruins of St. Mary's College, founded by Bishop Hotan and John of Gaunt; it has an

elegant campanile-like tower, and very graceful windows.

The ruins of Bishop Gower's palace are separated from the foregoing by the little river Alan, which is here crossed by an old stone bridge. Formerly a huge flat stone, polished by the feet of pilgrims, was the means of transit. It was called Lechen (talking-stone), and was credited with powers of speech. When Henry II. came to St. David's on his return from Ireland, he landed at the Monk's Harbour at Porthclais (the gate of the rivulet), and walked to the shrine with the staff and scrip of a pilgrim. At the Alan side he was met by a procession of the clergy, and when about to step on the Lechen, a woman threw herself on the ground crying out: "Lechen, defend our race and country from this man!" The king hesitated, for doubtless he was aware of a prophecy of Merlin's, which said that the king who triumphed over Ireland and returned with blood-red hands, should die on the stone. The clergy chanted a psalm, censers waved, and then Henry, addressing expostulatory words to the stone, took his courage in both hands, and stepped boldly upon it, and proceeded safely to the cathedral, where he paid his vows, with doubtless an extra offering to St. David, for the peril he had survived.

The south-east and south-west walls of Bishop

Gower's palace are in tolerable preservation, and are distinguished by a very beautiful open parapet of arches, resting on octagonal pillars with decorated capitals. The apartments were numerous, and were, it is said, sumptuously furnished with much carved work and tapestry. Not a vestige of this remains. The chapel has several lovely Early-English windows and a graceful bell-turret. There is a curious kitchen and two large halls. To one of these there is an extremely fine octagonal arched doorway, and a very beautiful rose-window, of which only one spoke of the delicately carved wheel is broken. The other hall adjoins the entrance, and has a heavy square porch with much defaced statues of Edward III. and Queen Philippa.

The ivy-clad wall—a mile round—formerly enclosing the cathedral and monastic buildings, shows us in its ruins that the Church in this wild, sea-girt land was obliged, notwithstanding its power, to be alert and armed.

There is no gas in St. David's City, and on moonless nights people go about with lanterns, for the queer little oil lamps give but an uncertain light. The inhabitants number about 2000, and are extremely primitive, kind and friendly to the modern pilgrims who roam about their ancient city; but the old chroniclers and the imagination alone tell the story of its importance and activity in days of yore.

Besides Henry II., numberless princely pilgrims, foreign and native, have journeyed thither. We will name a few English: William I., Edward I. and Queen Eleanor, Edward III. and Queen Philippa, and John of Gaunt was a frequent visitor and a munificent patron.

We can well fancy the trains of pilgrims from all quarters. Legend tells us that, when toiling up the sides of Carn Englynion (hence its name, now Carn Englyn), the angels came down from heaven to guide their weary feet. Every year, in the wild wintry weather, a long procession of priests and laity crossed the torrent of the Teifi and scaled the Precelly mountains, bearing the offerings from far monastic Llanbadarn to grace the festival of the patron saint. The lords of Kidwelly and Llanstephen, with their retinues skirting Caermarthen's sandy bay, and the Englishry from the walled towns of the east, guarded by stout serving-men, all wending towards the same spot.

But quite as numerous were those who came by sea. From North Wales, from Ireland, from across the Bristol Channel, they passed the dangerous strands and rough bays, in slight coracles, even women, with no one to guide or assist them, so great was their faith in St. David, and St. Cyric, the ruler of the waves. Working in with the tide, they would round the breakwater built by the monks at

their harbour of Porthclais, and, wading ashore, the devoted voyagers climbed the long hill-road to their goal.

Dewi's land—the patrimony of the Church—was sacred in the eyes of the pious though rapacious Norman, and he entered it only as a pilgrim. There were few alien settlers, and to this day it is a district purely Celtic, contrasting markedly with the people of the south of Pembrokeshire, the Anglia Transwalliana of Camden. They speak the old language—a service in Welsh in the cathedral is unique and striking—and they preserve the type of character, manners, and appearance of their ancestors.

Prosperous looking farmsteads dot the undulating and almost treeless country; the land is good, producing excellent wheat, and the air is pure and exhilarating. Breaking the monotony of outline are curious bosses of trap rock, which, like silent giants, frown over the fields. The interrupted chain of these upheavals, which lie chiefly to the north-east, is terminated, at the one end, near St. David's Head, in the precipitous peak of Carn Lliedi (592 feet), and the other in Penbery. From both, there are splendid land and sea views.

The two Solvas, Upper and Lower, on the main road, are very pretty villages, with a land-locked harbour nestling under a very steep hill. Near this

is the tumulus called Poyntz Castle. Newgale sands are broad and fine, and the seascape from thence magnificent.

Here we enter the hundred of Rhos, and soon reach Roch Castle, which from its position is a landmark far and near. This fine old fortress was built early in the thirteenth century by Adam de Rupe, or Roche, the founder of a powerful Norman family. A tall turreted tower alone remains. Like so many Welsh strongholds, it held for King Charles in the Civil Wars, sharing also the common fate of falling before the Parliamentary forces, by whom it was dismantled.

We have now reached Haverfordwest, and are once more on the track of the iron way.

CHAPTER II.

"Sad are the ruthless ravages of Time!
The bulwark'd turret frowning once sublime,
Now totters to its basis and displays
A venerable wreck of other days!"

HAVERFORDWEST—called Hwlffordd by the Welsh—the capital of Pembrokeshire, is pleasantly situated on the slopes of a hill above the western Cleddau, which is here a broad river. In ancient times it possessed many civic privileges. It has excellent markets, and there is an air of liveliness about it, especially when the assizes are being held in the old Guildhall.

The shell of the castle—destroyed by the inhabitants at the instance of Cromwell—is perched high on a rock above the town. It was built A.D. 1112 or 1115, by Gilbert de Clare, first Earl of Pembroke, father of Richard Strongbow, the conqueror of Ireland, and was for ages a place of great strength and size. In 1220 it was partially burnt by Prince Llewelyn, and later it was vainly besieged by Owain Glyndwr. Among its numerous owners have been Fitz-Tancreds, Marshalls, De Breoses, and De

Bohuns, finally coming to the Crown. Now it is a disused county jail, forlorn and dismal.

Haverfordwest, with its narrow clustering streets, conveys strongly to the mind the *raison d'être* of its existence in feudal times: the strong arm and watchful eye of the invader keeping at bay, from his rocky eyrie, the wild fierce natives, and round him, sheltering behind high walls, the burghers of a foreign race.

There are three churches; that of St. Mary, at the upper end of the steep High Street, is one of the finest parish churches in Wales, with pillars and arches, and a carved roof of great beauty. And from the old bridge, the eye is charmed by the graceful ruins of a Priory of Black Canons, of the order of St. Augustine. This establishment was richly endowed, and from its aisleless cruciform church, the bells for 350 years rang out a daily call to prayer over the fertile river vale.

Of the many domains in the pleasant country around Haverfordwest, the most noteworthy is Picton Castle, one of the few Norman castles which "have never been forfeited, never deserted, never burnt." It is strikingly situated above the confluence of the two Cleddaus, the chief rivers of Pembrokeshire. Sheltered amidst ancestral woods; the walls that William de Picton, a Norman knight, reared in the reign of William Rufus, still show a brave front,

though they have stood siege and assault. It held for King Charles in the Civil Wars, and a curious story is told in reference to its surrender. The nursery of the castle was in the lower storey of one of the bastions, at the window of which the nurse was one day standing with the infant heir in her arms, when a trooper of the Parliamentary forces rode up with a flag of truce and a letter. The woman opened the window to receive it, and while she leaned out the soldier, rising in his stirrups, snatched the child from her arms and galloped off. Shortly afterwards a message was sent to the distracted father, who was the commander of the garrison, informing him that unless the castle was immediately surrendered, the child would be put to death. Parental love prevailing, it was yielded, but he and his men were allowed to march out with all the honours of war; and the Parliamentary general, scorning the stratagem by which it had been won, gave orders that it should not be destroyed.

Adjoining this estate is Slebech; in feudal times a possession of the Knights Hospitalers of St. John. All that remains of their rule is the old church, with its recumbent effigies, and a huge sword which was used at the installation of the knights.

The country we are now traversing shows by its name-places the settlements of Danes and Norsemen. Their keels swarmed up the estuary of Milford, and,

penetrating its tributary creeks and rivers, poured forth crowds of heathen warriors thirsting for rapine and blood. By the strong hand they left their impress, sweeping away nearly all traces of the Romans, and it is surprising how much of pre-historic and British times survived their ravages. These antiquities are numerous in Pembrokeshire, though their history is a matter of legend and bardic fancy.

To the Danes succeeded their descendants the Normans, who built castles, and took possession of every fair acre. Their rule was stern, but highly beneficial in these remote parts, where law and order had been ruthlessly destroyed.

The Flemish occupation of Pembrokeshire, which has given to the southern portion of the county the name of Anglia Transwalliana (England beyond Wales), may as well be mentioned here. There is no doubt whatever of a colony of Flemings having been planted here by Henry I., among his other measures for keeping the Welsh in subjection. We have the direct testimony of William of Malmesbury, and other contemporary writers, on the matter; but modern research goes to prove that a great deal too much has been made of the Flemish question. Professor Freeman says, "The true way of looking at the matter is to look on the Flemish occupation of Pembrokeshire as simply the last stage of Teutonic settlement in Britain." And they did their work

thoroughly, for even the names of places have become English, a thing which everywhere, but especially in Wales, is a sign of a complete blotting out.

In that they were chiefly traders (Giraldus Cambrensis bears testimony to the excellence of their woollen manufactures—a reputation still retained in certain districts), the Flemings differed essentially from the previous invaders of the soil, though strange to say they assimilated less with the natives than the Normans had done. Their descendants still preserve in language and character an individuality which shows how wide and distinct the line of demarcation remained; marking the difference, very striking to the stranger, between the north of the county, to which they never penetrated, and the south.

Their language, a dialect of Low Dutch, was akin to the English of that day, and, though it still retains many peculiarities, it naturally became assimilated with English. "A couple" of sticks does not imply two—but a handful. "How" is used for why. To be "filty-fine" is to be overdressed. "Dotty" is used in a hundred ways, varying from bewilderment and foolishness to downright idiotcy. Everything is "he" or "she," and "man" rings the changes on its meaning considerably.

The conquest of Ireland is curiously connected

with the Flemings of Pembrokeshire. Henry I. granted letters-patent to Strongbow, earl of Pembroke, and others, to collect an army on behalf of Dermod, prince of Leinster, who had been deposed by his neighbours. With this army, composed principally of Flemings, they crossed over to Ireland and speedily reinstated Dermod in his possessions. In reward for their assistance he made a grant of land in Wexford to the chiefs of the expedition, who settled on it many of their followers; and these to a very recent date kept themselves—as their relations had done in Wales, or perhaps more correctly had been obliged to do—distinct in language, race, and customs.

The only line of railway in working order in Pembrokeshire makes an irregular square, and by following it we shall be brought back nearly to the centre of the county, from whence we will take the Queen's highway to Fishguard and the north.

Milford, a dull place now, has great capabilities from its vast and sheltered anchorage, and its position at the extreme west of the island, and these cannot fail to bring it into importance. By sailing from this port the American liners, if supported by the railway companies, would lessen the transit across the Atlantic by two or three days.

The estuary of Milford, the shores of which are

strongly fortified, is 20 miles long, reckoning from its head at the confluence of the two Cleddaus. It is terminated on the west by the peninsula of Dale, and St. Anne's Head, on which there are two lighthouses, and on the south by the sheltering peninsula of Angle.

It was at Milford that Henry Tudor, earl of Richmond, landed on his victorious march which ended in a crown on the field of Bosworth.

Freshwater Bay faces west, and is much exposed to the fury of the Atlantic; it has Linny Head for its southern point. Inland lies the hundred of Castle Martin, which gives its name to the famous breed of black cattle. The church of Castle Martin is a miniature St. David's.

A steam ferry connects Nayland, or New Milford, with Pater, or Pembroke Dock, as it is more generally called. This is a place of 6000 inhabitants, 1000 of whom are employed in the Royal Dockyard. "It occupies an area of eighty acres, surrounded by a high wall, flanked by two martello towers. There are twelve building slips for vessels of all sizes. There is also a dry dock for repairing them, and enormous stacks of timber of various kinds—oak, deal, and larch. The Nasmyth steam-hammer and saw-mill are particularly worth notice. As it is not a fitting dock, vessels when ready are towed round to Devonport, or Portsmouth, to be finished. The

dock is defended by a fort to the west, which mounts twenty-four guns, and by two martello towers, which each mount three. There are also large barracks on the hill above, and a hut encampment at Hobb's Point. "Up to 1864, £175,563 had been expended in fortifying Pembroke Docks." *Vide* Murray's 'Guide.'

Pembroke—Pen-broch (the head of the estuary)—is very interesting by reason of the ruins of the stupendous castle, situated on a rocky tongue of land formed by two *pills*, or creeks, which wash its base. The site of a British fort, it was one of the first places in the district seized upon by the Normans.

From the time when Arnulph de Montgomery erected this castle, about A.D. 1090 (the plan of it is ridiculously like the skeleton of a flounder—can he have been a wag?), down to that part of the fifteenth century when Henry VII. was born within its walls, it has had a large share in the making of Wales.

The great Norman keep is circular, and is upwards of seventy feet high, and at its base nearly seventeen feet thick. It had five floors and a stone roof. Round the keep are the remains of the chapel and numerous other buildings; the great well, projecting towers, bastions, portcullises, a drawbridge, and a moat (now dry), and a double set of encircling walls. From the battlements to the dungeons, this

mighty fortress, fortified alike by nature and art, was impregnable. The Wogan Hole—a corruption of Ogof (a cave)—is a large cavity in the northern wall, and is by some supposed to have served as a sally-port, by others as a second well, and that in the celebrated siege by the Parliamentary forces in 1648, the enemy finding it, broke down the entrance, and by thus cutting off the supply of water, forced the garrison to capitulate.

The account of the siege is mournfully interesting. Colonel Laugharne, with two Royalist gentlemen named Powell and Poyer, and the remnants of the army which had been defeated at St. Fagan's, shut themselves up in this castle, and so stout was their resistance that Cromwell himself had to go to the help of his troops who were besieging it. At first he too was repulsed, and the six-weeks' siege would doubtless have lasted much longer but for the incident already narrated. The three officers were condemned to be shot—eventually the sentence was reduced to one. Lots were drawn, it is said by a little girl. Two were marked "life given by God"—the third was blank, and fell to Poyer, who was shot in Covent Garden, 1649. And then the castle was dismantled.

There are three churches in Pembroke—ancient and interesting, and in the suburb of Monkton there are the remains of a priory of Benedictine monks.

Like some few other places the parish church and the priory chapel were under the same roof, though divided by a wall. It is of great antiquarian interest.

Two miles below Pembroke are the ruins of the episcopal palace of Llanphey—Llan Ffydd (Church of St. Faith), once a residence of the bishops of St. David's. It is generally thought to have been the work of Bishop Gower, but the arcaded parapet, which is distinctive of his style, compared with his other work looks poor, and consequently some archæologists consider it an imitation of later times. The ruins are now within the grounds of a private house, but accessible to the public.

Hodgeston Church, with its slender spire and beautiful chancel of the Decorated style, is well worth a visit.

St. Petrox (Llan Pedrog) is connected with a wild legend of a lady of the Mansel family, who is said to wander headless on the sands below; sometimes, as a variety, she drives in a coach with headless horses and a headless driver.

In Cheriton Church there is the recumbent figure of a cross-legged knight in armour, lying beneath a sculptured canopy. It is said to be that of Sir Elidur de Stackpole, who went to the Crusades, impelled thereto by the preaching of Archbishop Baldwin; but as he lived in the twelfth century, and

the monument is of fourteenth century work, it is either not his, or was erected long after his death.

The coast from Linny Head to St. Gowan's Head is very wild, being exposed to the full rush of the Atlantic, between which and America there is no land. Some of the limestone cliffs are called Stacks, and are broken into the most extraordinary forms. The chief Stacks, about four miles from St. Gowan's, are two lofty rocks detached in some remote age from the coast, and they and the adjoining cliffs are frequented in the summer by countless sea-birds —kittiwakes, guillemots, puffins, razor-bills, cormorants, and different kinds of gulls, each on their distinct rock. Their white wings, shining in the sun, or ghostly grey in the brooding storm, mingling with their plaintive or shrill whistling, make a deafening noise as with a rush they fly overhead.

In olden time Pembrokeshire was famous for peregrine falcons. Giraldus Cambrensis tells us that Henry II. used "to send every year for the falcons of this county which are produced on the sea cliffs."

Out at sea looms the Crow, a huge black rock, on which many a brave sailor has lost his life.

Bosheston-Mere is a narrow funnel-shaped cleft in the rocks, and in south-westerly storms the sea, driven by wind and tide, rushes through it like the spout of a geyser to the height of fifty feet.

In Bullslaughter Bay, there are some very large caverns, and on the mainland, between this bay and the Stacks, is the site of a Danish camp, and below it there is a great black chasm called the Caldron, through which the boiling waves boom and dash with the sound of thunder. The contorted strata of the rocks is very remarkable.

In a deep fissure hemmed in by precipices, and accessible only by a flight of rough steps, is the chapel of St. Gowan. Here that saint, said by some to have been Sir Gawaine, one of King Arthur's knights of the Round Table, spent many years in fasting and prayer. His little dwelling and oratory was partly hewn out of the solid rock, partly built into it. All is extremely primitive, wild and lonely. There is a wishing seat, and a well, where miracles were wont to be performed. Giraldus Cambrensis in describing these cliffs does not mention the chapel, and the inference is that it was not erected in his days, and the story of Sir Gawaine falls to the ground.

Stackpole Court, the residence of Earl Cawdor, is finely situated on a height overlooking woods and waters. It contains some fine pictures, and a stand of arms taken by the Pembrokeshire militia from the French on their futile attempt at invasion off Fishguard. A Hirlas Horn, or drinking horn, of great beauty, presented to an ancestor of the family by Henry VII., is also preserved here.

Following a coast of pretty sandy bays and broken cliffs, we reach Manorbier Castle. The keep has been converted into a dwelling-house by the tenant, who, being an ardent antiquarian, has in every sense added interest and improvement to his work of research and restoration. Situated at the head of an inland bay, it is remarkable for its picturesqueness, and was the work of various ages.

It has a drawbridge and fortified gateway, a grand hall, chapel, kitchen, and numerous other apartments. The walls and ramparts are almost entire, and much may here be learned of the mode of life of the lords of the land in the fourteenth century.

The towers were separate dwelling-houses, with distinct staircases.

The history of Manorbier is not one of sanguinary deeds, nor, as far as it is known, was it ever besieged, burnt, or dismantled. It was held by knight-service to the lords of Pembroke Castle, and the smaller gentry around owned their lands and houses by knight-service to such castles as Manorbier.

In A.D. 1146, the celebrated Giraldus Cambrensis was born at Manorbier Castle. This invaluable chronicler of his country in the twelfth century was a member of the De Barri family, to whom the domain belonged. He became Archdeacon of Brecknock, and accompanied Archbishop Baldwin on his

crusading tour through North and South Wales in 1188—the first archbishop who penetrated so far west.

Maternally Giraldus was Welsh, paternally of the conquering race. He was strongly superstitious, very active, eloquent, shrewd and observant, for many years an almost constant traveller, and an incessant writer. His chronicles are graphic, full of fact and anecdote, and are of extreme value. His ambition, for the furtherance of which he left no stone unturned, was to become Bishop of St. David's. Thwarted over and over again, his aim seemed at last on the point of being realised, for he not only got the promises of King Richard, and afterwards of King John, but he travelled to Rome to secure that of the pope. Eventually the measure was opposed, on the ground that to appoint a Welshman to the Metropolitan See of Wales would be dangerous to the supremacy of the reigning race. Giraldus was set aside and a Norman appointed.

This was too much for the fiery and ardent archdeacon, who, though strongly attached to his native country, had shown frequent antagonism to Welsh ideas, especially in church matters, and he hurled such defiant and wrathful words at his opponents, that he was declared an enemy of the Crown, and his lands were seized. The king and he however soon made friends, and he recovered his

property. At last, in 1215, the See of St. David's was again vacant, and, unsolicited, it was offered to him. But he was now old—sixty-nine years old—and worn out with toil, care, and controversy, he cared no longer for the once coveted honour, and declined the post.

Perhaps, in the nearness of another life, the desires of this had faded, and we would fain hope that the few remaining years of the kindly, bustling archdeacon's life were without bitterness or regret. One of the beautiful tombs in the presbytery of St. David's Cathedral is pointed out as his final resting-place.

The church of Manorbier is curiously irregular in its architectural arrangements, and highly interesting.

Old Castle Head leads us to Lydstep and the well-known caves, and the whole coast eastward is very fine, ending in Giltar Point, where the cliffs rise sheer from the water, and to the island of Caldy. This island is about one mile long, and half a mile broad, and connected with it at low water is the islet of St. Margaret. On Caldy there is a lighthouse.

The village of Penally has a good church, containing a fine altar tomb, and there is a churchyard cross six feet high, ornamented on the sides with an intricate ribbon pattern. From the churchyard there is a charming view seaward.

CHAPTER III.

TENBY.

"Here by the likeness on our height,
Shall memories of a life be fed,
Which generous as our daily light
Was simple as our daily bread;
And lives not kindled yet, be taught
Pure hope, strong effort, noble thought."

NUMEROUS guide-books extol the charms of this favourite sea-side resort, and enter fully into all particulars respecting it; but, without encroaching, we too may find something to say.

Like all true patriots we are attracted by the statue of Albert the Good. It is finely placed on the site of the ancient fortress, and is majestic in its proportions; and although it has not the fascination that surrounds the relics of our ancestors, nor the halo of mystery that shrouds their lives and actions, it is the memorial of a people's love and regret for one who, living in "the light that beats about a throne," left us an ensample of high integrity, and a throng of worthy deeds that corroding time will scarcely dim.

But except in the derivation of its name—Din, a fortified hill, and bach, small (the same as Denbigh in North Wales)—Tenby is purely an English town, though doubtless Welsh, or correctly speaking British, was spoken here when it was the language of the whole island. The statue too is English in every sense, so that the inscription on the pedestal, with its parade of heraldry, and allusions to the Red Dragon of the Cymry, with the epithet of Albert Dda, borrowed from that of the great lawgiver of Wales, is "perplexing and misleading." Moreover the inscription is chiefly in the English language, and there was no connection, except that of mutual hate, between the inhabitants of this centre of "Little England beyond Wales" and the natives they had supplanted or driven out. The red dragon was a beast to be shunned, and the laws of Howel-dda belonged to an unknown tongue; so that an attempt to represent any affinity between him and the wise and faithful consort of our beloved Queen, is meaningless.

The situation of Tenby is very picturesque, on a rocky peninsula stretching boldly into Caermarthen Bay, and terminating in St. Catherine's Point and Rock, with the castle ruins crowning the topmost ridge. The town is quaint and singularly pretty, with ancient walls and arches bright with lichen, and a bravery of green. The parish church of

St. Mary is remarkable for its size and fine ceiling, and its tall spire, which is a landmark far out at sea. On the quay the pretty little chapel of St. Julian, near the site of a very ancient one, is the House of Prayer for sailors, from whence, with the blessing of priest and people, they go forth on their dangerous calling.

The markets of Tenby are excellent, and there are houses and lodgings of all degrees for visitors, who on every hand meet with kindness and civility from the inhabitants.

There is a curious stretch of high ground for several miles between Tenby and Pembroke called The Ridgeway, consisting of an uprise of old red sandstone out of the limestone which flanks it on either side. Rare aquatic plants are found in the adjoining marsh.

Gumfreston Church, chiefly fourteenth century, has an elegant square tower sixty feet high, of the peculiar style of this county. It has also a baptistery, hollowed out of the north wall of the nave, a beautiful piscina, and a curious sanctus bell of bronze.

Seven miles from Tenby are the ruins of Carew Castle, inferior in size and situation to Manorbier, but very interesting, and extremely picturesque, holding high rank as the original fortress of the Princes of Wales; and later on as the home of some

members of the Tudor line. The earliest portions of the castle were built by Gerald de Windsore, who had acquired the adjoining lands as the dowry of his wife Nesta, daughter of Prince Rhys ap Tewdr of Dinefawr. It was called Caerau (fortified camps), "afterwards by helpless foreign tongues pronounced Carew." In the neighbourhood it is more frequently called Carey; which approximates to its original form. This relic of baronial splendour stands on one of the numerous arms of Milford Haven, by which it is protected on the north and west. Succeeding owners have made many additions, and it is the later work that is so striking. The powerful towers and battlements, the great Edwardian banqueting hall, with its fine flight of stone steps, the chapel, externally unattractive, internally full of interest, the long ranges of mullioned and traceried windows, probably of the fifteenth century, lighting magnificent apartments not unlike those of Kenilworth, show us that strength alone was not the aim of the builders, and that the age of scant accommodation and rough manners was passing away.

For more than 350 years Carew remained with the descendants of Gerald de Windsore, who had from early days assumed the name of their castle. After a lapse of time, during which it was in the possession of several different families, it returned to that of the original owners, with whom it has remained ever

since; and their armorial bearings, together with those of England and the Dukes of Lancaster, are sculptured over the principal gateway.

In 1644, Sir John Carew held it for King Charles I., but after Tenby fell he was compelled to surrender it, and the Cromwellians committed great ravages in the stately old place.

In the fifteenth century, one of the lords of Carew was the celebrated Sir Rhys ap Thomas of Dinefawr, who lived here in great style, and enlarged and greatly decorated it; but he is chiefly known for the share he had in assisting Henry Tudor—afterwards Henry VII.—on his march through the country after landing at Milford. Previously to that event, Richard III., suspecting that Sir Rhys was in league with his enemies, had sent commissioners to administer the oath of allegiance to him, and to demand his son as a hostage. He readily took the oath, but instead of sending his son, sent a letter protesting his loyalty, and declaring that—"should any one dare to land in any part of Wales where I have command, he must make his entrance over my body." It is said that the wily baron quieted his conscience by lying down on his back under a bridge over which his visitor was passing, not only unmolested, but greatly aided.

When Henry was firmly seated on the throne, he

did not forget his Welsh friends, and, amongst other rewards bestowed on Sir Rhys, conferred on him the Order of the Garter, and to celebrate this honour Sir Rhys held a grand tournament at Carew.

In the Cambrian Register of 1796 there is a most interesting description of it. Numerous knights—Herberts, Perrotts, Wogans, Butlers, Gruffydds, Morgans, Vaughans (of Tretwr), Jenkin Mansel, "the valiant," and many others from North Wales and England flocked to his summons.

The castle could not accommodate them all and their retinues, so tents were pitched in the park, where five hundred, "moste of them of goode ranke, were lodged."

This "feate of arms" began on St. George's Day and occupied five successive days. They had daily religious services; the bishop of the diocese and his chaplains officiating, and they had music of many instruments. Challenges were given to all comers. Sir William Herbert's challenge "for the honour of the ladies" was taken up by Sir Gruffydd Rhys, and each in armour, with his device and motto displayed, they ran "theire six courses." "In like sorte followed the reste." Sir Rhys ap Thomas himself, on a "goodlie steede," in gilt armour, attended by two pages on horseback, and a herald, was the judge of the jousts. "Sounde knockes," says

the chronicler, "you may be sure were receaved and returned, on both sides, but noe harme at all done." The affair was terminated by a supper at Caermarthen, and we are told: "One thinge is noteworthie, that for the space of five days among a thousand people there was not one quarrell, crosse word, or unkind looke that happened." It *was* "noteworthie." Doubtless the chronicler wore rose-coloured spectacles on the occasion.

Carew Church has a good Perpendicular tower, and several other points of interest. Near the castle there is a tall carved-stone cross; the surface of it is divided into panels, within which is an extremely graceful interlaced pattern. This cross is very similar to the ancient crosses, numerous in Ireland.

Saundersfoot Bay has bold rocky shores, in some parts wooded to the water's edge. It is a busy little port, trading in the shipment of coal. The scenery around is varied and pretty.

Amroth, with its fine reach of sand, is of the highest interest to geologists, for it has "undergone three distinct changes of level within recent geological periods." A modern mansion, charmingly situated, occupies the site of the fortress from whence Owain, son of Cadwgan, a prince of South Wales, issued forth with his wild companions on a raid on Pembroke Castle, when he stole away the

beautiful Nesta, wife of Gerald de Windsore. This wicked deed led to years of fighting and bloodshed, and to the cruel death of his father, who was a prince much venerated for his valour in the field, and his justice in the administration of law.

Eventually Owain was himself slain in the wilds of Ystradwy by the outraged husband.

Between Tenby and Narberth lie the coal and culm beds of South Pembrokeshire. They differ, both in the arrangement of the beds and the quality of the coal, from the other coal-fields of South Wales. Here it is anthracite, or stone coal, and it is found in "shale and sandstone beds, overlying millstone grit and carboniferous sandstone."

Narberth (above the wood) is on the slope of a hill near the bank of a tributary of the eastern Cleddau. The castle, of great antiquity, of which the remains are few, was built by Sir Andrew Perrott in 1246, to whose father the land had been given for knight-service by Arnulph de Montgomery. He married into the princely line of Howel-Dda; thereby conciliating the natives, as well as receiving with his Welsh wife a goodly dowry. The family flourished long and honourably.

In the neighbourhood of Lampeter Velfry good fossils are found, and in the parish church there are some fine old monuments.

The ruins of Lawhaden Castle are on high ground

above the woods of the pretty vale of the Cleddau. It was the baronial residence of the bishops of St. David's, and was moated and strongly guarded by walls and towers. In the days of Bishop Beck, A.D. 1280, who is believed to have built it, and who certainly founded the hospitium (the ruins of which are hard by), the bishops of St. David's were princes, owning large tracts of land, and living in great splendour, surrounded by armed retainers. They had not only to defend themselves, but to assist the Normans, to whose race they almost invariably belonged.

A noble gateway, with a grand round arch, and two strong towers with open buttresses, and a few trefoil windows, alone remain to give us some idea of its magnificence. It was set in a fine park, now defaced and deforested. It is by right of the barony of Lawhaden that the bishops of St. David's sit in Parliament.

Bishop Barlow, "the robber bishop"—perhaps no man has been as much abused by writers on this county, however diverse their views may be on other subjects—stripped Lawhaden and the Palace of St. David's of their leaden roofs, as indeed he turned to his profit everything he could lay his hands on. Lead was then far more valuable than it is now, as the method of thoroughly extracting the silver was not understood.

The name of this place could scarcely be more

erroneously spelt. It has had four or five variations—as the church is said to be dedicated to St. Aeddau, the correct style cannot be far to seek.

The pretty little Syfanfy makes fertile the land about Clarbeston and Bletherston, and the country between this and Fishguard is interesting and varied, with Plumstone and Treffgarne Hills, the high ground to the west, abounding in remains of tumuli and camps, and the graceful Precelly Mountains lying to the east. The mail road from St. David's to Fishguard, a distance of sixteen miles, is bleak, but of interest to the antiquarian, from the British remains which strew the vicinity, notably the cromlech at Longhouse, one of the most perfect in Wales, consisting of six upright stones, three of which are five and a half feet high, and are surmounted by a thick capstone sixteen feet in length.

The coast from St. David's Head to Strumble Head is little known to travellers, but the scenery is sublime, the indentations are numerous, and the cliffs, though without the bright colouring of St. Bride's Bay, are very fine.

Abercastell is a busy little port between Penclegyr Point and Penbruch Point, both bold headlands. About three miles north of the last named is Strumble Head, which, with the coast line eastward ending in Penainglas Point forms the southern boundary of Cardigan Bay.

This wild mountainous block of land is called Pencaer; its name implies British remains, but it is chiefly interesting from a very curious episode that occurred in the war between Great Britain and Napoleon Bonaparte.

In February 1797, a body of French soldiers, numbering 1400, under the command of General Tate, landed at Carreg-gwasted Point, in the parish of Llanwnda, and proceeded in the direction of Fishguard. The country people were in the utmost alarm, and, deserting their houses, took refuge in the towns and in the churches. The lord-lieutenant of the county, Earl Cawdor, hastily summoning the militia, to which was added a considerable body of volunteers, set off to meet the invaders, and came up with them on the following day. But meantime, the French had been plundering the farm-houses, and getting drunk from the spirits they found there. It happened that shortly before, a sloop laden with spirits had been wrecked on the coast, and the barrels which had strewed the shore had somehow, an occurrence not uncommon in those days, found their way into the cellars of the neighbouring houses, and the foreigners had broached them.

Deserted by their ships, and with a disorderly rabble about them, the officers of the expedition surrendered to Lord Cawdor unconditionally. The immediate cause of their decision is said to have

been due to the appearance on the adjacent hills of a large number of Welshwomen in their red petticoats and cloaks, who, impelled by curiosity and no longer afraid, had come to have a look at the foe, and who were mistaken for a large force of regulars.

Llanwnda Church was turned into a prison. One of the French officers stole the chalice, and tried to sell it at Caermarthen, saying he had brought it from La Vendée, which was doubtless his interpretation of the name of the church which was engraved upon it. He was convicted of the theft, and put into Haverfordwest jail.

A great number of the prisoners were sent to the hulks at Milford, and of those confined in Haverfordwest Castle, a hundred escaped by means of an underground passage and the help of two young Welshwomen, and succeeded in getting on board a small vessel in the river, where, overpowering the crew, they got off. The ships of the expedition wandered about the Irish Sea for some days, vainly seeking the point where they had orders to meet the troops. One was smashed to pieces on Arklow Bank, another was captured off Brest on St. David's Day, and, being put into repairs, was re-christened the "Fishguard," and did good service in the British navy.

The origin of this strange invasion is lost in obscurity. The invaders brought seventy cart-loads

of gunpowder, and a great number of hand grenades, and they evidently meant mischief. Could it have been a move in Napoleon's grand scheme of invasion?

Any one who had been robbed or ill-treated by the French was indemnified by the Government, and there was an old woman living in 1875 who was enjoying a nice little annuity, though the event that had earned it for her had nearly faded from her mind. The country people for years afterwards were quickly alarmed by any unusual sound which could be construed into the tramp of soldiers, or the firing of guns. It is said of an organist of St. David's Cathedral, that he was once so frightened, that, running off, he accomplished the distance between that place and Haverfordwest in forty-five minutes, but as that is sixteen miles, with as many hills, fear must have lent him wings.

Fishguard—called by the Welsh Afon Gwaen (Sheaf River)—is an extremely pretty little town. It is in two distinct parts, the Upper—on the sides of a steep rocky hill—and the Lower, the seaport, and overhanging both is a very high hill. The harbour is one of the few, from the Mersey to the Severn, of which the entrance is perfectly safe, having neither shoals nor bars. The water is deep, the holding-ground good, and

the largest ships can anchor, sheltered from south-easterly, southerly, and westerly winds. The Irish coast is distinctly seen in clear weather, in fact, Wexford is exactly opposite, at a distance of forty-five miles. The run across is twenty-five miles that shorter than from Milford to Waterford.

Fishguard was a port in the time of the Britons, and the Romans as usual following in their steps founded a colony here. The church, dedicated to St. Mary, is noteworthy, and the archæologist will find some scanty remains of monastic buildings.

On the opposite side of the bay are the fine sands of Goodwick.

The roads in the Fishguard district are very hilly-looking in the distance, even more so than they really are, and it is a puzzle how any four-legged animal with a load behind ever succeeds in getting up them. The country is delightfully pretty. The valley of the Gwaen, and its converging glens shelter rare specimens of birds and flowers. Trout are plentiful in the river and its tributary brooks, notwithstanding the watchful heron and the otter, which haunt their margins; and wild duck and woodcock give good sport. On the sea-shore the lonely dotterel and swarms of curlew are seen; and gulls with their piping note are heard above the sound of the waves, and seals lie basking on the rocks. There was a time, not very long ago, when

wild goats were to be found. Two were shot in 1869. One of them, perfectly white, had horns 39 inches from tip to tip, measuring in a straight line across, and the length of each horn along the outer curve was 36½ inches, and their circumference at the base was 7½ inches. The other goat, also a very fine specimen, was black.

Dinas Head (432 feet) has a ruined little church on the edge of the sands, and the restless waves sweep over the graves of generations of forgotten men.

It is seven miles from Fishguard to Newport, and the prettiest of the two roads thither is through the valley of the Gwaen; passing Glynammel, the home of Fenton, the learned historian of Pembrokeshire, and by the venerable church of Llanllewedog, and beside hanging woods and winding river, with the Llanllawer mountains shadowing the further view southward.

Newport—by the Normans called Novo Burgus, by the Welsh, Tref-Draeth (town on the sands)—is a pretty little town at the mouth of the river Nevern, which seeks the sea at this point. It has fine sands and delicious sea-breezes. As a matter of course there was a castle here. It was built by Martin de Tours about 1094. He and his successors were Lords-Marchers of Cemmaes—the surrounding district—holding their post direct from the

sovereign, at whose councils they had the right to assist. At their castle at Newport, all matters relating to life and property in the barony were tried. In time the lords of Cemmaes became Welshmen, and the present lineal descendant of Martin of Tours is a Lloyd, and by inheritance still holds the title of Lord-Marcher.

A short distance east of Newport is the village of Nevern, in a charming dingle beside the brawling river of the same name. In the ancient churchyard there is a beautiful old cross, carved with an interlaced pattern somewhat like the one at Carew already described. To it is attached the following legend. On the 7th of April—the date on which the cuckoo is generally first heard in these parts—it was formerly the custom for the priest never to begin the service in church until the single note of the harbinger of spring was heard by the assembled congregation. One year, priest and people waited long; at last it reached their ears, weak and low, and apparently near at hand. When they came out, they found the cuckoo dead upon the steps of the cross.

The church at Nevern is dedicated to St. Brynach, a contemporary of St. David's, and so holy a man that he is said to have entertained angels, not unawares, but in angelic guise, in his rude cell on a hill-side, called from that circumstance Mons

Angelorum. Angels' visits seem to have been neither few nor far between in this neighbourhood, even if we decide that this hill must be the same as Carn Englyn, overlooking Newport, and across which they are said to have helped the pilgrims in their toilsome march to St. David's shrine.

The vale of Nevern from Eglwyswrw to the sea is extremely pretty and varied.

The romantic looking village of St. Dogmael's, with scanty monastic remains, is on the river Teifi, and separated by it from Cardigan. The abbey—second to Strata Florida alone—owed its erection to the builder of Newport Castle. Having wrested the country from its lawful owners, Martin de Tours set about raising a thank-offering, and chose the site of a humble church belonging to the family of Gwynfaredd Dyfed. In time his stately edifice fell before the rapacity of Henry VIII.

A pretty little church—Early English in style—now occupies part of the old ground. Near it is an inscribed stone—the stone of Sagranus, carved with Ogham characters.

CILGERRAN CASTLE.

"Stately the feast and high the cheer,
Girt with many an armed peer,
And canopied with golden pall
Amid Cilgerran's castle hall;
Illuming the vaulted roof
A thousand torches flared aloof;

The storied tapestry was hung,
With minstrelsy the arches rung,
Of harps that with reflected light
From the proud gallery glittered bright."

Stately and imposing as are the remains of so many of the ancient strongholds of Wales, none surpass Cilgerran for beauty of situation. Nature in her most bewitching forms clings round this once grim fortress on its rocky height, now the hunting-ground of the antiquary and the artist.

The original Norman castle is supposed to have been erected by Roger de Montgomery, the father of the conqueror of Pembroke, probably about A.D. 1092, and in the constant wars of this, and the succeeding century, it played an important part. From its incomparable situation—commanding the look-out over both sides of the Teifi, and a great extent of territory—it was the key to power, and frequently changed hands. In 1166, it was captured by Lord Rhys, "the destroyer of castles," who for several years defied alike the power of Henry II. and his barons. It was during this period that the hosts of Gwynedd and Morganwg (North and South Wales) advanced on the army of that king near Chirk, waging with it a furious battle, in which he had a very narrow escape of his life. Storms and floods, a scarcity of provisions and constant attacks, forced the proud Plantagenet to relinquish the

campaign, and to make peace with the Welsh chieftains, amongst whom were Lord Rhys, Owain Gwynedd, Cadwaladr, and Iorwerth Goch ap Meredydd.

In 1188, Archbishop Baldwin and Giraldus Cambrensis were entertained at Cilgerran by the same redoubtable Rhys, and escorted by him with great honour to the next castle. After this prince's death, Cilgerran changed hands several times. In 1214, Llewelyn ap Iorwerth made a desolating raid into South Wales, committing frightful retaliation on the Normans, and utterly destroying several of their castles. Cilgerran he spared, and bestowed it on Maelgwyn, a disinherited son of the aforesaid Rhys. Six years afterwards, in 1222, William Marshall, second Earl of Pembroke, recovered it to his family, and commenced a new structure on the same site, and it is the ruins of this which we now see. It remained with the Marshalls for a great number of years, and probably from its strength and impregnability was unmolested even in the hour of victory, when, in 1258, the brave Walter Malifant was slain, and the Normans totally routed by a host of Welsh warriors. It remained for Cromwell to strip it of its renown, and it then passed away from its ancient owners. Cilgerran was simply a military fortress, unlike Newport, which was held by knight-service.

Pembrokeshire is throughout moderately fertile,

and agriculture is the chief pursuit of the inhabitants. Slate is quarried in the Precelly mountains, and coal, chiefly anthracite, is found in the south of the county. Flannel is manufactured, as it is more or less all over Wales.

Though in parts the inland scenery is very charming, it is its magnificent coast, bold headlands, rocky islands, and sheltering bays that attract the stranger, for nowhere in the Isle of Britain are they surpassed in wildness and grandeur.

We have touched but slightly on the very interesting ecclesiastical history of Pembrokeshire.

The early teachers of the Christian faith, not only here, but throughout Wales, have one sin laid to their charge by those who endeavour to learn something of the older religion of the natives. Their writings boast of the pitiless war they waged against Druidical remains. Too ignorant to read the runes, which they assumed were symbols of magic, they were only too successful in extinguishing the learning which Cæsar tells us had made Britain a classic land, to which scholars came from afar to complete their education.

Besides being the birthplace and home of the patron saint of Wales, Pembrokeshire is honoured by such names as St. Dubritius, who was born at Fishguard, and of Asser, the friend and tutor of King Alfred. Though a thousand years have passed

away, his birthplace near St. David's is still called Tref-Asser. The famous Giraldus Cambrensis we have already named. Lord Chancellor Houghton was a Solva boy. The first king of the Tudor line was born at Pembroke. Stalwart knights, and courtly dames, and earnest true-hearted sons and daughters, unknown to fame, have lived and loved in this land of legends and old-world customs.

> "Sleep, warriors and bards that have perished,
> And green be your places of rest!"

This county assumed its present boundaries, slightly altered recently by the Local Government Bill, in the reign of Henry VIII. It has been marked by the episode of the "Rebecca" insurrection in 1843 and 1844, which was full of strange and romantic details.

"Rebecca" (which might be called a generic expression) and her followers, to the number of six hundred, and most of them mounted, used to assemble nightly in some pre-arranged spot—for these raids were always made at night—and, under the guidance of a mysterious "tall man," issue forth to the destruction of turnpike-gates, workhouses, weirs, and to the plundering of the houses of those who were obnoxious to them. The proceedings were summary. "My children," asked the leader in Welsh, "this gate has no business here, has

it?" The question was responded to by a shout and an immediate attack, and the helpless and affrighted toll-keeper very soon saw his gates broken and his dwelling roofless. Not a word of information of any value could the authorities glean, notwithstanding that high rewards were offered; and the revolt against law and order spread like wild-fire. A partly-disciplined mob of many thousand persons entered Caermarthen in broad daylight, and had not a detachment of dragoons, which had made forced marches, galloped into the town in the midst of the *melée*, it is difficult to say what might have resulted.

The military were harassed by false alarms, and while they marched all night in one direction, "Rebecca" was working with a will in another.

No household was safe, and matters had grown very serious, when the Government, at last roused to the danger, sent large bodies of troops and police; and, efficient measures being taken, the revolt was subdued, though not without difficulty and bloodshed.

One good result ensued. Commissioners were appointed to inquire into the grievances of the people, and a state of things, especially with regard to education, or rather the want of it, was disclosed which was almost incredible, and a great change was at once set about.

A lapse of time within the memory of many who took part in these lawless outbreaks, and the hated turnpikes have again disappeared; but now by Act of Parliament. No one rejoices; but, using the privilege of the "Briton," people are more inclined to grumble, preferring

> "Rather to bear the ills we have,
> Than fly to others that we know not of."

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